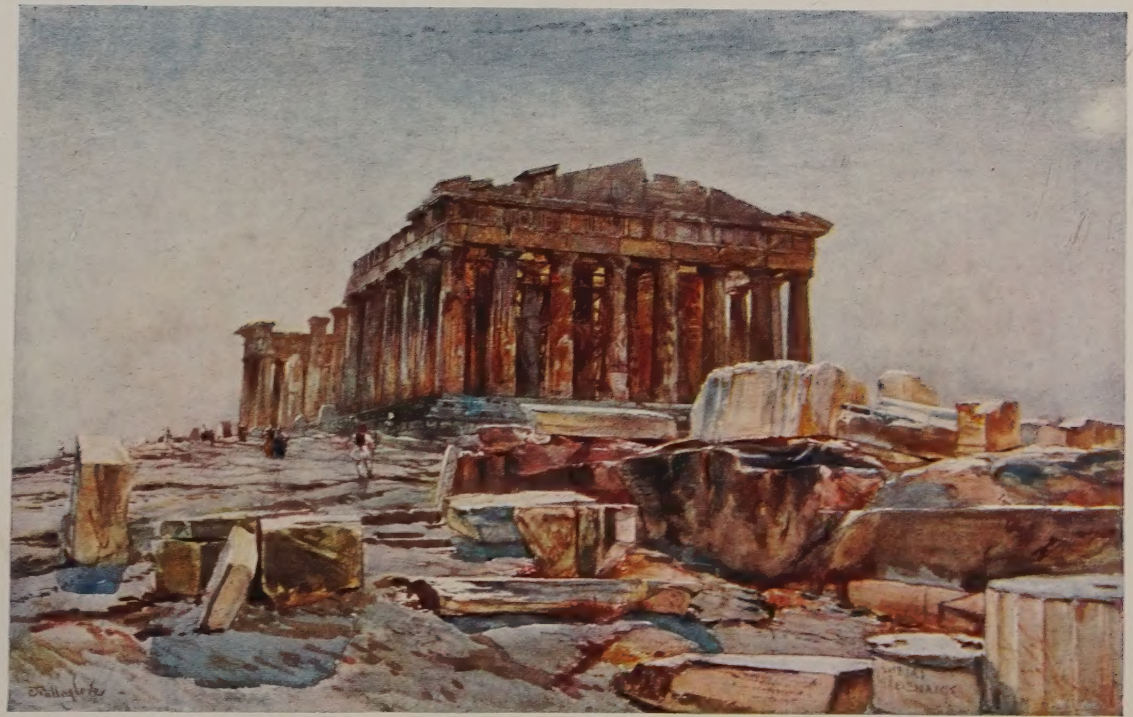
PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

ANCIENT GREECE



THE PARTHENON FROM THE PROPYLÆA

PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

ANCIENT GREECE

BY

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"PEEPS AT ANCIENT ASSYRIA," ETC.

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SKETCH-MAP OF ANCIENT GREECE

ANCIENT GREECE

CHAPTER I

THE TORCH-BEARERS

Among all the peoples of the ancient world, there have been three, who, as it were, have been chosen by Providence to hold high the torch of Knowledge, that all other nations might see its light, and follow where the torch-bearers led.

Of these three, one, in the beginning, was a little knot of men who, according to their own ancient stories, had come from a far country to the pleasant land of Italy. There, after many wanderings and adventures, they founded, on the banks of the River Tiber, a city which grew to be the great and famous city of Rome, and which came at last to hold empire for many a day over almost all the world, as men knew it in those far-off times. To Rome it was given to hold high the torch of the knowledge of Law. For the Romans' watchwords were ever Order and Obedience, and what they themselves had learned in long ages of storm and stress they imposed upon all the nations that came under their sway, so that the Law of Rome ruled the actions of all civilized men in Europe for hundreds of years. And, ever since, the laws which the Romans framed for their own guidance have been the model after which the nations have shaped the varying codes of law under which they live.

The second of the three was a race of mingled blood which rose to greatness among the fertile valleys that lie between the mountains and the far-stretching gulfs and bays of the fair land of Greece. For among the ancient race of dark-haired Southerners who dwelt in Greece and its isles before the dawn of history, there came troops of big, fair-haired men from the North, Achæans, Dorians, and the like. Swarm after swarm they came during many years, conquering the gentler Southerners, and then settling down among them, and mingling with them in marriage, till, from this union of North and South, there arose a new race, with the strength and courage of the North, and the swift wit and love of beauty of the South, so that the men of Hellas, as Greece was called in the old days, were the cleverest, the most inquiring, and the most artistic of all the races of that old world.

To Greece it was given to hold high the torch of Wisdom—the wisdom that deals with all things of the mind, and with all beauty of the earth and man. Never, in that ancient world, never, perhaps, in all the world's history, has there been a race that has bred so many deep thinkers, so many seekers after the truths of nature, so many great singers and dramatists, above all so many great artists in sculpture and painting as this little people of Hellas. In the van of all the companies of great men from among all the peoples, who through the ages have sought after wisdom and beauty, you shall always find a Greek holding up his light for the rest to follow. Wherever men inquire into the mysteries of the human mind and life, they are following in the footsteps of Greek leaders. Wherever, in poem or in tragedy, they try to sing the greatness or the sorrow of mankind, it is a Greek who

has struck the first note. Wherever they seek, in sculpture or in painting, to express the beauty and wonder of life, they are following those great Greek artists who first gave to the world the idea of beauty, serene, balanced, perfect, and whose wonderful works have never, in many respects, been surpassed, nor will be.

The third of the torch-bearers was a little race of wholly Eastern blood. Long time thralls in the land of Egypt, slaves of that mighty ancient civilization at whose relics we still marvel, they were freed at last, and found a home in the little, rugged, unattractive hill-country of Palestine—a land that was little more than the bridge between the two great empires of Assyria and the Nile. There for a little while they held a troubled sovereignty, and then for many generations were bowed under the yoke of greater nations; and there they gradually wrought out the great task which it was given them to do in the history of the world.

The Roman's task was a great one—to give Law to the world. The Greek's was greater still—to give Wisdom and Beauty. But greatest of all was the task of the Hebrew; for to him it was ordained that he should be the torch-bearer of the knowledge of God, and teach to the world the truth of things eternal. He was to have none of the power of Rome; he was never to know the Greek thirst for wisdom; he scorned and abhorred the Greek craving for earthly beauty. But he held before men's eyes a greater light than either, and rose to thoughts about God far nobler, truer, purer, than ever were reached by Roman law-giver or Greek philosopher, so that the world sees God to-day by the light that first dawned among a handful of Hebrew serfs, grew to its morning brightness in a

third-rate Oriental kingdom, and reached its meridian glory in the life and teaching of a Jewish carpenter.

Now of Rome and the Romans I have written somewhat already in one of these little books; and perhaps I may tell you some day, in another, of Palestine and the Hebrews. Meanwhile my task is to tell you what may be told in a little space of the second of these Torch-Bearers of the World—of the beautiful little land of Hellas, which we call Greece, and of that wonderful race of men who called themselves Hellenes, and are called by us Greeks, the splendour of whose genius flamed at its highest for little more than two centuries, yet has lightened all the world ever since with its glory.

If you look at the map of Europe, you will see that the Continent throws out southwards into the sea three great projections or peninsulas, and that these three peninsulas are all separated from the lands to the north of them by great mountain ranges. Westernmost of the three is the land which the ancients knew as the Iberian Peninsula, and which we call Spain and Portugal. Midmost, projecting like a big boot-leg into the Mediterranean, is Italy. Easternmost comes Greece, not so clean-cut as the other two, nor so separate from the mass of Europe to the north, lying quite close to Asia Minor, to which it is almost joined by a group of little islands dotted over the Ægean Sea.

These three peninsulas have all played a great part in the history of the world; Spain and Portugal, perhaps, not quite so great a part as the other two, though we must not forget what the world owes to the famous navigators and explorers of these lands. Their mountain walls to the north kept them free for a long time from the assaults of the fierce and rude tribes of

Northern Europe, and allowed them to develop their own life. Their easy access to the sea was always tempting them to adventure and conquest. And of the three peninsulas it was the smallest and most easterly where European men first wakened to civilized life, and first began to shape the world to its present form.

Greece, it has been said, "hangs like a jewel on a pendant from the south of Europe into the Mediterranean Sea." The central jewel of the pendant is surrounded by a cluster of lesser brilliants, "the isles of Greece," of which Byron sang so beautifully. The northern part of it, where, below the Balkan Mountains, the jewel joins the necklace, though far larger than the southern part, has always been less important, at least in the times of which I am writing. Macedonia, Epirus, and Thessaly were never more than half Greek in those early days. The real Greece of which we must think is the little country lying south of all these, below the Othrys Mountains. Look at it on the map, and read the names of the states that are gathered there—Bœotia, Argolis, Achaia, Laconia, Attica; or better still, read the names of the cities—Thebes, Argos, Delphi, Olympia, Corinth, Sparta, and, above all, Athens. Everything that is great and glorious in ancient Greek story rises to your mind as you read them, and stirs your blood like a bugle-call.

Now, still keeping your eye on the map, I want you to notice some other things about this real Greece. See how thoroughly the country, small as it is already, is broken up by arms of the sea. Greece has a very long coast-line for its size, because of the long gulfs and bays that reach into the very heart of the country. The sea that is thus brought everywhere almost to the

gates of her cities is a sunny, sheltered, inviting sea—the very thing to tempt the inexperienced early sailors of Europe to adventure. Nearly all its best harbours look east, and that was an important matter in those days, because it was the lands of the East, Babylonia and Egypt, that first were civilized, and so were most worth trading with, and because Greece was linked to the East, as I have said, by its cluster of beautiful islands. You can sail from Greece to Asia without ever being out of sight of land ; and that was no small matter to these early navigators, who had no compass or chart to guide them. Greece, then, is to be an adventurous, exploring, colonizing land, and all her early story, at all events, will be connected with those mysterious Eastern lands, with Troy, and Egyptian Thebes, and with all that shore of Asia Minor, where her colonies, from Trebizond to Cyprus, were strewn so thickly.

Next, notice how much the land is split up, not only by the sea, but by ranges of mountains as well. There are no great far-stretching plains in Greece, except in the northern parts, which scarcely count in our story. Greece is a country of little plains and valleys, divided from one another by big ranges of wild mountains ; or rather, let us say, it is a country of big mountain ranges, with little plains and valleys nestling among them. Now, what happens in other countries like that—in the highlands of Scotland, for instance, or in Switzerland ? Why, that instead of a real nation, one over all the land, you get a clan or a canton in each valley, akin in race, no doubt, to its neighbour over the hill, but quite separate from it in interest—with its own trade, its own culture, its own army or navy, perhaps its own capital city, if it is big enough—and,

above all, its own pride. That is exactly what you get in Greece. Though all Greeks were proud to call themselves Hellenes, there never was in Greek history such a thing as a united Greek nation.

Even when they had to fight for their very lives against the giant power of Persia, the Greeks could not really unite. Thebes held aloof, Corinth held aloof. Athens and Sparta had to bear all the burden; and Sparta was furiously jealous of Athens all the time, and played her ally some very shabby tricks. The curse of Greece was that all these little clans of the country were always quarrelling with one another, till at last the great quarrel, which we call the Peloponnesian War, came between Athens and Sparta, wrecked Athens, and almost equally ruined Sparta. If the Greeks had been one, as the Romans were one, they might have conquered the world by arms as well as by thought and art; but it was not to be. Nature said No! and the Greeks, great as they were, were not great enough to say Yes! in spite of Nature.

One more point remains. What a little land it is! Yes, a very little land, if you count greatness by size. Great and famous history was made there in very small space, and by a very small nation. Athens, at her greatest period, held perhaps 30,000 free citizens, though she had a much larger subject population. Sparta probably never had more than 10,000, for she kept her citizenship very strictly guarded. The whole yearly revenue of the little empire which Athens ruled for a while was only about £100,000! We, who spend in a few months as many millions as Athens spent thousands in a year, may wonder and smile at the idea of such a little state calling itself an empire and aspiring to greatness. But out of that little income Athens built the

Parthenon, to say nothing of other buildings, only less beautiful than that unrivalled temple. The Greek army at Marathon strikes us as ridiculously small, and the whole Greek fleet at Salamis could be sunk in an hour or two by the smallest of our light cruisers; but that army and fleet beat back all the power of a mighty empire. For size is not greatness. Greece bred in her little towns some of the greatest men that the world has ever known; and we, who also live in a little country, ought to be glad to remember that it has been the little countries which have done the most for the world.

CHAPTER II

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG

Now of the early days of this fair land of Greece, and of the men who lived there in the morning of all things, when the world was young, the Greeks of later times had many stories, and strange, to tell. Such were the tales of how Jason and the Minuai sailed from Iolcos, in the wondrous ship *Argo*, to seek the Golden Fleece that hung in Colchis, in the realms of King Aietes; and of how Herakles, the great son of Zeus the Father-God, freed the world from many a pest, slaying the lion of Nemea, and the Lernæan Hydra, and dragging up from Hades the three-headed dog Cerberus, keeper of the gate in the kingdom of the dead; and of how Perseus, the brave son of Danaë the Princess of the Brazen Tower, slew the Gorgon whose dreadful face turned to stone all who beheld it, and how he saved the Princess Andromeda from the sea-monster—and many other such like stories.

No other race has ever had so many or so beautiful romances of its early days. Yet even till within the memory of men who still live, it was deemed that these tales were but wild romances, dream-children of the brains of ancient poets, and with naught, or little, of truth in them. But now we grow more cautious in our judgments, and believe rather that, however many the false wonders that have been added to the stories, there lay behind each tale some real truth of some great deed that was wrought in ancient days, and not seldom some priceless knowledge as to the men who lived in these far-off times.

In especial there were several stories which told how, long before history, as we speak of history, began, there ruled in the great island of Crete a mighty king named Minos. He was a Sea-King, a Viking of the Southern seas, as were our forefathers of the Northern, and his war-fleet of black galleys gave him wide dominion over all the lands of the Ægean. Ruthless he was, and cruel, and men said that in his great palace at Knossos he had made a maze, that was called the Labyrinth, and that in the inmost recesses of this maze there dwelt a strange monster, half-man, half-bull, called the Minotaur, which is the Bull of Minos. To this monster, they said, there were cast, every ninth year, seven youths and seven maidens, who were sent as tribute from the city of Athens, which Minos had conquered. And these, thus cast to the loathly brute, were by him slain and devoured.

They said, moreover, that the young prince Theseus, son of Ægeus, King of Athens, coming to Knossos with the tribute of youths and maidens, slew the Minotaur, being befriended by the Princess Ariadne, daughter of King Minos, who had fallen in love with his boldness

and his beauty. For she brought to him in his dungeon a sword wherewith to slay the monster, and a clue of cord by which he might thread his way through the mazy paths of the Labyrinth; and when he had done his work, and freed the world of the vile creature, Ariadne fled with him and his companions in their black ship. And in after days Theseus was Lord of Athens, and fought with the women-warriors, the Amazons, and wedded their Queen Hippolyta, and was the friend of Herakles the great hero.

Yet other stories the Greeks had of this great King Minos. They told how he was favoured of the great god Zeus, and talked with him face to face in a cave on the Sacred Mount of Crete; and how his wondrous artificer Dædalus, first of great inventors, was imprisoned by the King in his anger, and escaped with his son Icarus by making wings for the twain of them, with which they flew over the sea. But Icarus soared too near the sun, and its heat melted the wax wherewith his wings were fastened, so that he fell into the sea, and was drowned. And when Minos learned of the escape of his captive, he manned his great fleet and went in chase of him even to Italy; and there the great king perished miserably by guile and treachery.

Now some part of these ancient stories we may lay aside at once—I mean the marvels and the monsters that we read of in them. For these, we know, are of the same family as the giants and dragons of our own fairy-tales. Wonders grew around the original story as the years went on, the fancy of one story-teller after another adding always a fresh touch to the marvel, or a fresh horror to the monster. But the core of the whole has been proved, and that not many years ago, to be simple truth; for an English scholar and explorer,

Sir Arthur Evans, has found on the summit of a little hill in Crete the remains of the ancient palace of this grim King Minos, and the open-air theatre where his captives made sport for him, and the dungeons where they were confined. And he has found that the great sport of the Cretans was to witness a game, if it can be called a game, in which youths and maidens grappled with a bull, and leaped over his head, catching him by the horns as he strove to gore them. In Greece also another scholar, Dr. Schliemann, has found the graves of men of kindred race to these Cretan Sea-Kings, who dwelt in great fortresses of piled stone, and possessed rich treasures of wrought gold and ivory and bronze.

And altogether we have learned that long before the true Greeks of history appeared, there lived in the Greek islands and on the mainland, in such cities as Mycenæ and Tiryns, a race of men of whom these ancient stories were told. They were a people small of stature and dark of hair and colour, quick of brain, skilled in building and painting and in the craft of the potter, but, above all, daring and skilful seamen, who sailed east and west through all the Mediterranean, and left their colonies on many a far-off shore. These men used weapons and tools of bronze ; they marched to battle lightly armed, wearing no mail, but only a loin-cloth on their bodies, covering themselves with a great shield made of wicker and leather, and shaped like a figure 8 ; and they were skilful with the sling and the bow.

Then there began to come down out of the North, from the forests and mountains of Central Europe, swarms of big long-haired northern men. The first-comers were, perhaps, the Achæans, as they called themselves—Homer's "long-haired Achæans," who

fought at Troy; then came Thessalians, and, last of all, Dorians. Mighty fighters they were, and especially the Dorians, but their main advantage over the dark Southerners against whom they fought lay in their weapons. For the Northmen were cased from head to foot in bronze harness—a helmet with a nodding horse-hair crest, a hauberk covering the body, greaves to protect the legs, and a round buckler with a central boss; and their swords and spear-heads, instead of being made of the softer bronze, like those of their opponents, were of iron.

With such advantages, little wonder that they pushed the Southerners before them. The old strong-holds of the Sea-Kings were overthrown, and the newcomers settled down in the lands they had won. Yet there were parts of the country into which the invaders did not penetrate, or from which they were thrown back. The Arcadians told how, when the Dorians came against them, it was agreed to decide the ownership of the land, not by a battle between the two hosts, but by a single combat between the Arcadian champion, Echemus, and Hyllus, the leader of the Dorians. Echemus proved victor in the fight, and the Dorians duly observed the bargain and retreated. The men of Athens, too, and their brother-Ionians who lived on the western coast of Asia Minor, claimed to have kept themselves free from aught but a slight mixture of northern blood.

Now when the Northerners had made their conquest, they settled down in the land, and that happened, which ever happens in such cases; they wedded wives of the dark southern race, and their sons and daughters were a new people, with something in them of both North and South. The North gave strength, warlike

E. Alinari

THE PROPYLAEA. (*See p.* 36.)

spirit, cleanness of living, and the love of music; the South gave wit and quickness, the passionate love of beauty, the love of the sea, and that yearning after the unknown which makes adventurers and explorers. And when these two sets of gifts had been thoroughly mingled and fused in the new race, there arose for a while in Greece a people such as the world had never seen before—a people bold in arms, pure, on the whole, in conduct, daring in exploration, eager in the search after truth, and with such an instinctive love for and taste in all things beautiful, that their work has remained ever since a standard by which beauty in art is measured, and most other races seem mere clumsy-fingered bunglers beside them.

Where the Northern part of the mixture was strongest, as with the Spartans, who claimed to be pure Dorians, there was more of the warlike, and less of the artistic, so that the Spartans were the foremost soldiers of Greece, but did almost nothing for art or letters. Where the Southern element prevailed, as with the Athenians, there was a keener love of the sea, so that the Athenian was a notable fighter in sea-battles, but less so in warfare on the land, and a natural quickness of intelligence, and a passionate love of art that have never been excelled by any people. Roughly, you may say that the Spartan was the soldier, the Athenian the sailor, trader, thinker, and artist of Greece; and the other clans of the land, Thebans, Argives, Arcadians, and the rest, inclined in the one direction or in the other according as they had more or less of Northern or Southern blood in their veins.

Now when these Achæans from the north had been some while settled in Greece, and were masters of

the old cities and strongholds where the Southern race had once held sway, and while yet the Dorians had not come, or were but beginning to come, into the land, it fell out that there arose a great quarrel between the Achæans and their neighbours who dwelt on the other shore of the Ægean Sea, in the land that was then called the Lesser Phrygia, and in the famous city of Ilion, or Troy, where King Priam ruled. For Paris, the son of Priam, had come as a guest to Menelaos, King of Sparta, and had carried away the king's wife Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world. Therefore the Achæans took up the quarrel of Menelaos, and gathered a great fleet and army, led by Agamemnon, King of Mycenæ, and brother of Menelaos, and by Achilles, Odysseus, Ajax, Diomedes, and many other famous chiefs.

For ten years they beleaguered Troy, and many were the victories and defeats that fell to the one side or the other in the course of the war. No man on the side of the Greeks was so noble or so knightly as the gallant Hector, who led the men of Troy, though Achilles was the mightier man-at-arms. At last, when Hector had been slain by Achilles, and Achilles himself had fallen to the arrow of Paris, Troy was captured by the stratagem of the Wooden Horse, of which you have all heard. But the capture of the city did not end the troubles of the Achæans who had warred against it ; for misfortune followed them on their homeward journey, and but few of them reached their native land in peace. To the wisest of all the Greeks, Odysseus, the chief of the little island of Ithaca, the gods appointed ten more years of wandering and adventure, so that when at last he returned to Ithaca and to his wife Penelope, who had waited faithfully for

him so long, there was not one of his comrades remaining to him.

And long years after all these things had happened, there arose in Greece, some say in Chios, one of the Grecian islands, a great poet named Homer, one of the greatest of those who have sung songs such as the world will never let die ; and he sang in immortal verse the tale of the Siege of Troy, the valour of Hector, and the wrath of Achilles. And his song has come down to us, and it is called the "Iliad," because it tells of the war against Ilion. Thereafter he sang another famous song, which tells of the adventures of the wise Odysseus, as he returned from the Trojan War. And that song is called the "Odyssey." These were the first of all the great poems that the world has known, nor have any greater songs ever been sung than these, whose maker is but a dim shadowy figure standing amidst the morning mists of the dawn of history. Some day you will read them for yourselves, and learn how great was the nation which, even in its childhood, could breed such men.

CHAPTER III

A LAND OF CITY-STATES

Now, as I told you in the first chapter, there never was a Greek nation at all, in the sense in which there is a British or a French nation. A Greek, of course, or as he would have called himself, a Hellene, always recognized another Hellene, whether he was a Spartan from Laconia, an Athenian from Attica, or a Syracusan from the great Corinthian colony in far-away Sicily, as being far more close to him than a man of any other

race. And he always felt that any Greek, even though he came from the rudest parts of the country, Arcadia or Ætolia, or places like these, was infinitely better than any outsider. The outsider might be a high-bred Persian gentleman from a city far greater and more gorgeous than any of the Greek towns, and the Greek might be a shepherd or an olive-grower from a rough little country place; still the Greek was a Hellene, and the Persian was a barbarian, whose speech no decent human being could understand. All the same the Greek never dreamed of the feeling which we have for our country. We may belong to London or to Edinburgh, or to some little country village in England or Scotland; but we think of ourselves first and last as Britons, not as people of this town or that. Our laws are the laws of Britain, not of any town in the land; our loyalty, however loyal we may be to our town, is first of all to our country; our pride, no matter how proud we may be of our native place, is the pride of Britain and of Britain's greatness.

All this a Greek would not have understood in the least. It would have seemed to him that all our feelings were upside down. With him it was his city, first, and last, and all the time. Everything that we give to our country, and feel about our country, he gave and felt to and about his city. There were no laws of Greece, holding in every part of the country, though there were some religious customs and ideas and ceremonies that prevailed everywhere. The Greek thought of himself as an Athenian, a Spartan, or a Theban; he only called himself a Hellene to distinguish himself from the barbarians. His city had its own form of government and its own laws, both quite different from those of the next town

twenty miles away. His pride was in the splendour, the power, the great history of his own town, rather than in that of the land to which it belonged. To us it would seem a most unheard-of piece of treason that Edinburgh should make war on Glasgow, or Liverpool on Manchester; but a Greek saw nothing strange in his town making war on another Greek town only a few miles away over the hills from his own town; in fact it seemed to him the most natural thing in the world to do. Sometimes he carried the thing so far that, to make his city victorious over the rival city, he would call in the help of the very barbarians whom all the Greeks despised as scarcely better than beasts. In the great war between Athens and Sparta, for instance, each town in turn tried to overwhelm the other by bringing in help from those very Persians against whom they had both fought side by side only a generation or so before.

It seems very topsy-turvy, doesn't it, to our ideas? But to the Greeks our ideas would have seemed just as topsy-turvy. For there was nothing clearer to their minds than that the city was the one perfect form of state, that it was to his city that a man owed his allegiance, and that in city-life alone could man make the best of himself, and reach the greatest heights of civilization, comfort, and learning. And really, when we think of all that they did, and what wonderful results they got out of this way of theirs, which seems so strange to us, we must not be in too great a hurry to assume that they were wrong and we are right. The Greek's idea would have a very poor chance to-day, and his little city-states would be ground to dust between the great empires of the modern world; but in their own time they did their work perhaps better than it could have been done by our method.

No doubt it all meant that Greece could never become a great empire. Athens did try for a while to make an empire, but she failed out of sheer exhaustion, because she was far too small a state for the task. But if your city-state was small, it was all the more compact and interesting. You loved it all the more intensely, because you knew from your childhood almost every stone of its buildings, and could see almost every acre of its land from the temple-crowned fortress in the heart of it. Its wars were not far-away things that only professional soldiers took much interest in, as so many wars of a great empire must always be. You knew by sight, and perhaps by name, almost every soldier of the little citizen-army that marched away out of the city gates, and your anxiety, while the strife went on, was all the greater, your pride in victory all the keener, your sorrow and shame in defeat all the sorer.

In fact, patriotism was to the Greek a thing of whose intensity we can scarcely have any idea. It was, of course, a far narrower thing than we understand by the word, since it only referred to a single city and the little patch of land around it ; but, if the channel was narrow, the current was all the deeper and stronger. A Greek counted nothing too much to do or to give for his beloved city. His devotion might claim his life, as with the Spartans who died at Thermopylæ, and whose epitaph was—

> "Go tell at Sparta, thou that passest by,
> That here, obedient to her word, we lie" ;

or it might show itself, as at Athens, in the intense pride which the Athenian took in making his city more beautiful, more stately, more cultivated than any other in Hellas ; but it was always wonderful.

When the Athenian silver mines at Laurium, the property of the state, began to yield a revenue, Themistocles had little difficulty in persuading the citizens that, instead of each man claiming his own share, as he had a right to do, they should all unite in devoting the whole sum to the building of a fleet—the fleet that saved Greece from Persia at Salamis. I wonder if all the citizens in our land would be patriotic enough to do a thing like that to-day.

Each young Athenian, when he was enrolled in his tribe, took an oath, not only that he would never disgrace his arms or desert his comrade, but also that he would hand on his fatherland greater and better than he found it. And if the rivalries of the different cities led to a ruinous waste of the energy that might have made Greece mistress of the world, we must not forget that there was a nobler side to this rivalry, and that the citizen's pride in his city was the spur that made the Greek accomplish the wonders of art and literature which are the marvel of all ages. "As iron sharpeneth iron," so the generous rivalry of the Greek cities made each citizen eager and alert to see his own city taking a foremost place. What other group of towns no larger than the cities of Greece can show one hundredth part of the glories of building, of sculpture, of learning and literature that these can show? It was the intense patriotism bred by the eager life of the city-states that alone made such triumphs possible.

How then did these little states, that have done so much for the world, first arise? I have told you already how Nature had so divided Greece by bays and mountains as to make a united nation almost impossible—each little plain, separated from its

neighbours by sea-loch or mountain range, making a home for a separate clan or tribe, which lived its own life between the mountain-wall and the sea. Let us look for a little at the most famous of them all—Athens, with its land of Attica.

You have a triangular piece of land about the size of Kent, projecting into the Ægean Sea, which washes two sides of the triangle. The third side is walled in by the mountain ranges of Kithairon and Parnes, which cut it off from its northern neighbour, Bœotia, where the Thebans live. Between the mountain-wall and the sea, you have a clan of Ionians, living in scattered villages, and finding their main industry in olive-growing. The light soil is not good for grain, and what between the call of the sea, and the need for importing corn, the clan is naturally inclined to seafaring and trading.

But our villages are far too scattered and defenceless for these troubled times. The Ægean swarms with the long black galleys of the sea-rovers, for piracy is looked upon as a regular and quite gentlemanly trade. Sad experience teaches us that we must take steps to resist these wandering gentry more efficiently than any group of scattered villages can do. We must have a central fortress, where the strength of the land can gather and its treasures be stored in time of need. Here, almost half-way down the western side of the triangle, is the very place for it—a great flat-topped rock, standing alone, and towering almost two hundred feet above the plain. It is four miles from the sea, so that we have good warning of any pirate raid, and can be ready to meet the rovers when they come ; and yet it is handy enough to the sea, if we want to go trading ourselves, for there are

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A Greek Theatre—Epidauros. (*See pp.* 67—76.)

bays with fine beaching-ground for our own galleys. On this rock, then, we will build a castle and a temple —the castle, to make our land secure, the temple to honour our tribal God ; and in time of danger folks can come here to shelter from the enemy.

Gradually people begin to find it handier to live under the shadow of the great rock than merely to run to it when the sails of the rovers are sighted ; and so a town begins to grow up on the lower ground around the Acropolis, as we now call our stronghold. For a while we go on as before, each little village in the plain governing itself, though in time of war we all obey the chief who has his home in the castle on the rock. But that is not good either, for with so many governments it is difficult to organize the clan for war ; and so at last one strong wise chief (people say it was Theseus, the prince who slew the Minotaur) persuades or compels us to make the town by the rock the seat of government for the whole land. We can't all go to live there, for it is too far to travel to our farms, and only the wealthier folks from the country take up town houses. But we are all enrolled as citizens of Athens (so our new city is called, after its virgin-goddess Athene) ; we all, by and by, come to have a vote and a share in the government ; and we all call Athens our Metropolis—our Mother-city.

Bit by bit the city grows in importance, and the land around it becomes more and more only a convenience for the city, until at last the rude fortress on the rock has grown into a magnificent citadel, with temple after temple crowning it in splendour of marble and bronze, and a great town lies beneath in its shadow, with stately squares and streets, and magnificent porticoes and theatres. Down on the shore lies a busy

seaport, with three great harbours, Peiræus, Munychia, and Phalerum, and the four-mile stretch between the city and its port is enclosed between battlemented walls, which make town and harbour practically one. Athens dominates all Attica now, and every free citizen in the farthest corner of the little plain looks to the city by the Acropolis as his city, for which he lives, and for which, if need be, he is ready to die.

Of course the story would be a little different in the case of each city-state in Greece; but its main outlines would always be the same. A scattered tribe living in little open villages—the need of a fortified centre for refuge and defence—the choosing of a strong hill or rock for the building of a fortress—and then the gradual growth of the city and the city-state round the castle and temple on the rock. So it was at Corinth, with its stately Acrocorinthus; so at Argos, with its Larissa; so at Thebes, with its Kadmeia. The one outstanding exception to the rule was the state of Sparta, which remained to the end of its existence nothing but a cluster of open villages, where a small warrior-caste of knights, who never deigned to soil their hands with trade or field-labour, ruled by force and fear over a great crowd of slaves and serfs.

Strangely enough it was Athens and Sparta, the two states of Greece that lay wide apart as the poles from one another in almost every detail of their constitution and life, and that were destined in after days to be deadly rivals for supremacy in Greece, that were called upon to stand shoulder to shoulder against the might of the vast empire of Persia in the great struggle which settled, once and for all, whether Europe should become a mere province of an Eastern empire, or be left free to work out its own fate and to shape its own civilization.

CHAPTER IV

ATHENS IN ITS GOLDEN AGE: THE JOURNEY

Now we are going to pay a visit to the most famous city of Greece—"The City of the Violet Crown," as her orators loved to call Athens; and we want to visit her when she is at her very best, after she had become great and splendid, but before the faults which ruined her had begun to show themselves. So on a fine day, in early summer of the year 438 B.C., we find ourselves on a Lemnian trireme, sailing round Cape Sunion on our voyage to the Peiræus, the port of Athens. The ship on which we are travelling is going to join the Athenian fleet, as the contribution of Lemnos to the funds of the Confederation of Delos—the alliance of Greek states and islands under the headship of Athens, which has been formed since the Persian Wars.

This is going to be a great summer at Athens, for not only is it the year of the great Athenian religious festival, the Panathenæa, which takes place once in four years, but this year the splendid new temple, the Parthenon, which Iktinus has been building, and Pheidias, the famous sculptor, adorning, is going to be dedicated to Athene, the virgin-goddess of the city. All that is best and noblest and most beautiful in Athens will be seen, above all in the great procession when the new mantle of the Goddess is carried up to the Temple to be laid before the magnificent statue of ivory and gold which Pheidias has set up in the shrine.

We of Lemnos have a special interest in Athens and in the Acropolis, for we are really Athenian colonists, and only twelve years ago we gave Pheidias the commission for a fine statue of Athene to be set up on the

old rock in the Mother-city, and we are proud to think that it goes by the name of the Lemnian Athene.

Our pleasant voyage among the Greek islands is drawing to a close. We have passed Scyros, where our old hero Theseus was buried, and whence, thirty-five years ago, Cimon brought the gigantic bones of the old champion to be buried with honour in his native city. The end of the long island of Eubœa lies behind us on the north, and now, slipping between Ceos and the mainland, we see the temple-crowned heights of Sunion on our right hand, and turn northwards into the Saronic Gulf. We shall be in harbour before night. Wide to the westward lies Ægina, "the eyesore of the Peiræus," as Pericles calls it, for the islanders and the Athenians are always quarrelling. And now before us we can see through the clear southern air Peiræus itself, with its three harbours, Munychia, Zea, and Cantharus.

Behind the port, two long lines of white battlemented wall stretch inland for several miles, and at the upper end of them lies the great city that we have come so far to see. A line of low hills, girt with walls, and crowned with buildings; on the right of the line, a big square-fronted rock that no one can mistake, towering above the city that crouches at its base, and flashing with gold and bronze as the sunlight strikes upon temple and statue. That dark sharply outlined hill to the north-east, beyond the walls, must be Lycabettus; and eastmost of all, curving round behind the city, lies the great mass of Mount Hymettus, glowing rose-pink in the evening light. See that bright star that flashes highest of all from the top of the Acropolis, and that we have kept in view almost ever since we rounded Cape Sunion.

That is the gilded spear-point of the huge bronze statue of Athene the Champion that Pheidias has set up to guard her rock and her temple. Nearly seventy feet she towers, from the foot of her pedestal to the golden crest of her helmet, and there is no more welcome sight to the homeward-bound Athenian sailor than the first flash of Athene's spear.

But Athens will keep for a new day, and now we are drawing up to the harbour-mouth. Had we been a mere merchantman, we should have gone into the Great Harbour; but, being a unit of the Athenian navy, our harbour is the inner basin, Cantharus. Our galley sweeps between the two mole-heads, with their huge windlasses for hauling across the chain that closes the mouth of the port at night or in war-time, and we drop anchor in the outer basin. To-morrow the ship will go into Cantharus past the second chain, and will be hauled up on a slip for overhaul. With that, however, we need not trouble ourselves, as our destination is the city itself.

Only, before we leave Peiræus, take a look round about the basin. This inner harbour is the true Cantharus, "the Cup," and its deep sweeping curve suits its name. All around it, like spokes radiating from the hub of a wheel, lie the galley-slips, the ways leading up into big sheds, where the galleys that are not on service can be stored, with their equipment, snugly under cover. Nowhere in the world will you see so fine a collection of fighting-ships, for Athens is mistress of the seas just as certainly as Sparta is foremost in land warfare. These are the descendants of the splendid 200 galleys that were the backbone of the Greek fleet at Salamis, and except that, ship for ship, they are rather bigger than their ancestors,

and built on rather better lines, they are practically the same as the old wooden walls that broke the strength of Persia in that mighty struggle. Everything is perfect order, efficiency, readiness, for the Athenian knows that his fleet is everything to the city and the empire, and each trierarch strives to outdo his neighbour in bringing his trireme to the pitch of perfection. Paint and polish are not spared in the Athenian fleet; but there is a great deal more than paint and polish about it, as the Persians found, to their cost. Peiræus itself, the harbour-town, is quite a new place. Themistocles had it laid out on a regular plan after the great Persian invasion, and it has broad streets crossing one another at right angles. Indeed, so far as the streets are concerned, it is much finer than anything that you will see in Athens, and it has its own public buildings, which are quite grand and fine. All the same, it has neither the interest nor the beauty of the mother-city, and we must leave it behind us, for we have a walk of rather more than four miles before we reach the house of our friend Aristodemus, with whom we are to lodge during our stay in the city. Evening is beginning to fall, and we must walk smartly, for the streets of Athens are no joke in the dark. Fortunately Aristodemus himself has come down, with a couple of his slaves, to guide us, and the slaves have horn lanterns with them which we can light if necessary.

Before us stretches a long straight road, about 200 yards wide, closed in on either hand with high battlemented walls. These are the famous Long Walls, the great fortifications which Themistocles built to unite Athens and her harbour-town into one great fortress. The Spartans, who were rather jealous of us after the

Persian War, wanted to hinder us from building them, but Themistocles was too clever for them. He went himself to Sparta to discuss the matter, leaving instructions for the work to be carried on night and day during his absence; and at Sparta he managed to spin out the discussions day after day, and week after week, till at last he got a message from Athens that the walls were high enough to be defended. Then he threw off the mask, and quietly told the Spartans that Athens did not need their permission to fortify herself, for the walls were already built. Look at this wall beside you, and you will see signs of the hurry in which it was run up. Here is a fragment of an old pillar, with an inscription on it, embedded in the wall, here again a door-lintel from some ruined house, and, a little farther on, even a piece of a broken tombstone. All the same, the fortification is very strong; the walls are 14 or 15 feet thick, and the Athenians are very proud of "The Legs," as they call them, and of the cleverness with which their leader outwitted the Spartans.

If we had not been in such a hurry, we should have taken the longer road north of the walls, which makes a pleasanter walk; but we must get into town before the gates are closed. So we tramp on steadily, the slaves behind us carrying our baggage, and at last we pass through the Melitan Gate, and are actually in Athens. Collytos, the part of the town where Aristodemus lives, is in the more fashionable quarter on the north side; but to reach it we have to go through several streets, and to cross the Agora, or Market-place. That little hill on your right hand is Pnyx, where the public assembly of the citizens is held, and this other hill in front of you is Areopagus, where the

great state trials take place. Now we turn to the left, and go northwards towards the Agora, through a narrow, and I am afraid I must say very dirty, lane. Really our friends in Athens have no great reason to be proud of their streets. This one is neither paved nor drained. The mud is pretty bad in places. Take care that you don't trip over that heap of garbage; you can smell it, even if you can't see it very clearly. Someone is opening a door beside you—look out, he is shouting "Existo!"—"Clear out of the way!"—and as we make a bolt for the other side of the street, the contents of a slop-pail come splashing out, and more smells are added to the quite sufficient number that have been assailing your nose for the last five minutes.

Here is the Agora, however, and we can keep well out in the middle of it, and be safe. Business is all over, and the market-place is quite quiet and deserted. That building on your left hand, with the rows of pillars, is the Stoa Poikile, "The Painted Porch." Some other day you must visit it, and see the great pictures of the Battle of Marathon and the Capture of Troy by our famous painters, Panainos and Polygnotus. We cross the little stream of the Eridanus by a foot-bridge, and, after a short walk through broader and cleaner streets, Aristodemus stops, and knocks at a door in a blank wall. While you wait for the porter and his dog to come out of their lodge and open the door for you, read the sentence carved on the lintel: "Let no evil enter here." That is to keep off evil spirits, but sometimes rude people make a joke of it. Aristodemus has a neighbour, Pasicles, a little farther along the street, whose reputation is none of the best. Lately he built a new house, and the first night after he had put up "Let no evil enter here" over his door

JASON, MEDEA, AND ORPHEUS WITH THE GOLDEN FLEECE. *Page 8.*

some rascal wrote below: "But how is the owner to get in then?" Pasicles was very angry, but the more he raged, the more his neighbours laughed.

Here comes the porter. You can hear him grumbling and the dog growling. As he opens the double door, he is just going to say, "Not at home," for Aristodemus is rather run after, and his porter has learned to be pretty short with visitors; but the moment he sees his master he is all smiles, and the dog changes his growling into eager wagging of his tail. So we step across the threshold, inlaid with "Welcome" in mosaic; and as we are very tired, we get a wash and a light supper, and so to bed. To-morrow we shall have a better chance to see our friend's house, and all the sights of Athens.

CHAPTER V

ATHENS IN ITS GOLDEN AGE: THE CITY

Very early in the morning we waken, refreshed and ready for a day's sight-seeing, after the night's rest. It is not much past dawn, but already the household is stirring, for the Athenians are all early risers, and think nothing of going to call on one another as soon as the sun is up. When we come out into the court-yard of the house, Aristodemus is already there, walking up and down in the early sunshine, dressed in his white tunic and mantle, purple-bordered. We shall have early breakfast in a few minutes, merely a little bread dipped in wine. Meanwhile we may take a look at the house where we are to stay during our visit to Athens.

It didn't look very imposing as we came to it yester-

day evening, for, like almost all Athenian houses, it showed only a blank wall to the street, and the walls are only of sun-dried brick, set in wooden frames, and covered with stucco. The Athenians keep their splendour for their great public buildings, and even a famous man like Pericles lives in quite a simple and unpretending house. The open court where we are standing is the favourite gathering place for the family and its friends, for in this fine climate we all live, as much as possible, in the open air, and the lighter meals, breakfast and lunch, are served in the court. Dinner, in the evening, takes place in the large dining-room, which opens off the court on one side. Round the court runs a covered veranda, whose tiled roof is supported by pillars about ten feet high. In the centre stands the family altar, dedicated to Zeus of the Home, where Aristodemus gathers his family and slaves for family worship. The floor of the court is of cement, patterned in different colours. On either hand, doors, covered with hanging curtains, open into our little bedrooms. These are quite simply furnished, with bedsteads of olive-wood or bronze, the legs inlaid with ivory. The flock mattresses are supported by leather thongs laced through the framework of the bedstead, and the coverlets are wool, or else skins dyed purple. One or two light folding chairs and a tall bronze lampstand complete the furnishings, which, though very plain, are very gracefully designed. We must not forget the wardrobes, however, which are big wooden chests, carved and exquisitely inlaid with ivory and colour.

On one side of the court opens the door into the women's side of the house; but that we shall not see, for though Praxinoë, Aristodemus's wife, may perhaps

come to breakfast or lunch, with the children, in the courtyard, when we have become more at home in the house, the Athenian women keep very much to their own quarters. In fact, the saying goes in Athens that "that woman is best who is least spoken of among men, whether for good or for evil," and wise men say that a woman's chief duty is "to see as little as possible, to hear as little as possible, and to ask as few questions as possible." So Praxinoë, who is a model wife, keeps herself pretty much to the women's side of the house, where she looks after the slaves, and manages household affairs. All the same the Athenian ladies manage to get a good deal of their own way, and perhaps the children get even more. Indeed, our great man, Themistocles, once jokingly said that his child was the real ruler of Greece: "For Athens rules Greece, and I rule Athens, and my wife rules me, and the child rules her." So perhaps we need not be too sorry for Praxinoë, with her spinning and weaving behind the curtain, or for little Megacles and his sisters, whose toys are lying about the courtyard, and whose swing is hanging under the veranda, between two pillars.

Now comes breakfast, and after it we shall go down town with Aristodemus. First of all we shall go to the Agora, for the fish-bell has just rung to let the town know that the new catch is up from Peiræus, and when that sound is heard everybody runs to the market, for the Athenians eat a good deal of fish, and very little meat. As we go down, with two slaves behind us to bring back our purchases, Aristodemus tells us the last joke about the fish-bell. Charicles, the famous harpist, was giving a recital the other day in a hall near the market, when suddenly the bell rang. Up

jumped all the company and ran off to the fishmongers' stalls—all except one man—leaving poor Charicles in despair. He came up to his one listener. "Thank you, sir," he said, "for being the only man to have the manners to stay when the fish-bell rang." "What?" said the good-mannered one, "did you say the fish-bell? I am too deaf to hear it. Thanks very much for telling me. Good-bye." So he took to his heels like the others, and Charicles was left lamenting.

The market-place is as busy this morning as it was empty last night. It is full of wooden stalls and wicker-work booths, which will all be cleared away after noonday, and everyone is making the most of the "full-market" from nine to twelve. All the merchants seem to be shouting at once—"Buy vinegar—buy oil—buy charcoal," till your ears are deafened. But the fishmongers are the worst. They know they are indispensable, and their impertinence is beyond bearing. Just listen to this rascal talking to that decent citizen, who could buy him and his booth fifty times over. "How much for these two mullets?" A grunt from the fishmonger—"Might be half-a-crown." "Rather dear, isn't it," (for we never buy in Athens without haggling), "won't you take two shillings?" "M—yes, for one of them." "Now, my good man, stop joking, and take two shillings." His highness gives the fish an indignant slap—"Prices is fixed," he shouts, "if you won't give the half-crown get out of this."

Nearly everybody who is anybody in Athens is in the market-place, for the Athenian loves to be sociable, and to know what is going on. Of course, the poorer citizens have their work to attend to; but as every well-to-do Athenian owns a fair number of

slaves, there is plenty of leisure among the upper classes, and life is a very pleasant and unhurried affair to them. Most of the quiet dignified gentlemen with whom Aristodemus exchanges salutations are dressed very much like himself, in white tunic and mantle, with purple border. Nearly all are bareheaded, and while a good many wear sandals or shoes, red or white, nearly as many go barefoot. It is no hardship in such a delightful climate. Some of the younger men, however, are as gay as a flower-garden, in cloaks of purple, red, or green, and wear broad-brimmed hats, and very gorgeous boots laced high up the calf, while they have a fine taste in knobbed sticks, with rings of gold or silver round them. Young men, of course, have a kind of special licence to make themselves splendid; but on the whole your Athenian rather laughs at extravagance in dress. There is Meidias the Ionian, bustling through the Agora, with four slaves behind him (no well-bred man would have more than two), and wearing a long purple mantle, whose gold fringe comes right down to his heels. As he swaggers along, with much waving of heavily beringed hands, everybody smiles behind his back, and Aristodemus grumbles something about "the town not being big enough to hold these outsiders."

In one corner of the Agora, where a rather shabby side-street opens off the market-place, a noisy discussion is going on, round the door of a dirty-looking shop. Half a dozen tall Scythian archers, with their bows slung over their shoulders, are standing by the door, and their officer is saying sharp things to the shopkeeper. In fact, he is telling the man that if he doesn't keep better order in his wine shop the magistrates will shut it up altogether. The worthy sergeant speaks

his Greek with a most pronounced Scythian brogue; but he manages all the same to make his meaning quite clear to the tavern-keeper, who looks very uncomfortable. Not more so, however, than one or two citizens, who ought to have known better than to be in such a place, especially at such an hour. One of these puts his head out at the door, but, seeing the crowd, draws back, looking very shamefaced. As he vanishes, Aristodemus gives him a parting hit. "You had better come out, Kallias; the more you draw back, the more you will be inside the shop."

These Scythian archers are the Athenian policemen. There are 1,200 of them, and the force was set up by Speusinos. So we call them Speusinioi, just as the British barbarians 2,200 years hence will call their police "Peelers" after their great Archon, Sir Robert Peel. They keep order, or try to keep it, at the public meetings, attend the magistrates, and carry out their orders, as we have seen them doing. And we all laugh at them and their brave attempts to speak Attic Greek—laughter seems to be the fate of policemen in all lands and ages.

Unfortunately the chances are that we shan't see the man whom we would have wished to see above all others. Pericles is not a snob—no well-bred Athenian is—but he keeps himself pretty much to himself, has the reputation of being rather distant and cold in his manner, and, above all, hates the gossip which his fellow-townsmen so dearly love. Everybody, for instance, haunts the barber's shop, and when you are there you are sure to hear all the latest news, true or otherwise, from the gentleman who trims your hair or beard. But the last time Pericles was at the barber's, he mortally offended that useful newsmonger. "How will you have

your hair cut?" said the barber to the great man. "In silence," was Pericles' grim answer; and now the barber is sure that Pericles is not the man to govern Athens.

But perhaps we have dawdled long enough in the Agora. Aristodemus has made his purchases and sent them home, and now we may take a stroll up to the Acropolis, and have a look at least at the outside of the great Parthenon, before its dedication. On your left hand, as we go out of the Agora, and a little north of the great rock, you will see the Prytaneum, the meeting-place of the fifty senators who form the senate's committee for public affairs. Each of the ten tribes has its fifty representatives, making a council of five hundred, and each fifty holds office for a month. The Archons, our chief magistrates, and a few of the most distinguished citizens, always dine in the Prytaneum together, and a citizen who has done special service to the State may have that privilege granted to him for the rest of his life. There is no higher honour than to be promoted to a seat at the Prytaneum dining-table.

Now we pass through the valley between the Areopagus and the great Temple-rock, and, turning to the left, we have the stairway and the great gates in front of us. By the way, Pericles has given the town a new Hall of Song, the Odeum, which stands below the rock at the farther end. It has a high, conical, domed roof, the only one of the kind in the city. Now, Pericles himself has rather a cone-shaped crown to his head—in fact, in his portrait-busts he likes to be sculptured wearing a helmet to hide that too prominent development; and a rude joker can always raise a laugh as the great man passes, by calling his head his Odeum. The Athenians are not what

you would call a reverent people, and even when they think no end of a man they can't help poking fun at him all the same.

Here is the great stairway, then, with its towers and gates. We pass through an outside gate, between two square towers, almost plain, but of fine masonry, and before us a flight of marble steps, 70 feet broad, leads up to the main entrance gate, the Propylæa. Mnesicles, who designed the gate, has only got his work half-finished as yet, but already it is magnificent, and quite justifies the pride with which all Athenians regard it. It is going to cost them about a million and a half before it is complete ; but they don't grudge it, because they feel that such a building is a greater honour to the city than any amount of wealth. It is fronted with a noble triple colonnade of huge marble columns, and on either side of the entrance passage there will be picture-galleries with paintings by Polygnotus, Panainos, and others.

We pass through the gates and colonnade, and come out on a wide paved platform. Before us, a little to the left, towers the great bronze figure of Athene the Champion, lifting the gilded point of her spear high above all the buildings on the rock. But the great sight is the splendid temple that stands on the right hand—the Parthenon, the Shrine of the Maiden-Goddess. Nowhere in all the world will you see so beautiful and magnificent a building. It is not that the size is so very great, for you may see far larger temples in Egypt ; but nothing that the Egyptian builders ever reared can compare for a moment with the beauty and dignity of this wonder of the world. The temple is a great oblong, 228 feet from east to west, 101 from north to south. The

THE BATTLE-FIELD OF MARATHON FROM MOUNT PENTELIKON.

eastern front, at which we are looking, has a double row of Doric pillars of golden-white Pentelic marble, supporting the triangular gable, which rises 65 feet above the base. Each pillar is more than 34 feet in height, and the two longer sides of the building are faced with single rows of similar columns, while the west front has a double row to match the east. But the glory of the whole building is its sculpture. Look up to the great triangular gable. It is filled with figures hewn out of the lovely Pentelic marble, which stand out clear and sharp upon a background of deep crimson. The subject of the whole scene is the birth of Athene from the head of Zeus. The great father-god sits majestically on his throne in the centre. Beside him stands the new-born goddess, who has just sprung full-grown and fully armed from his head, and close to them is Hephæstus, the artificer-god, whose hammer has just struck the blow that set Athene free. Iris, the swift-footed messenger of the gods, hastens to give to mortals the news of the glorious birth; while in one corner of the scene the chariot of the Sun, with its fiery horses, is rising out of the sea, and the chariot of the Moon sinks to rest in the waters at the opposite corner. All the great figures are delicately touched with colour to give them life-likeness, and the whole pediment is a hymn of praise to the glory of Athene. If we go round to the western front we shall find its gable filled with another sculptured scene, representing the contest between Athene and Poseidon, the god of the deep, and the triumph of the virgin-goddess.

Below the triangular gable, and between it and the great marble beams that cross from pillar to pillar, holding up the whole roof, is a series of square panels

running round the whole temple, and separated from one another by alternate breadths of deep fluting. On the panels are sculptured in high relief scenes from ancient Greek legend, the Battle of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, of the Greeks and the Amazons, the Gods and the Giants, and so forth. There are ninety-two of them in all, each standing out upon its background of softly glowing colour.

Now let us mount the steps and pass within the colonnade. Look up, as you walk round between the pillars and the inner wall of the temple, to the frieze of sculpture that runs right round the wall just below the roof. It is well worth craning your neck to see, for here Pheidias has put forth all his skill, and no temple on earth has such a glory on its walls as this 524-feet-long ribbon of the Panathenaic Procession.

It begins on the eastern front of the wall. Here sit the immortal gods and goddesses, quietly at home in their good city of Athens. Hera, holding aside her veil, turns to speak to great Zeus, her husband, who sits a little apart. Athene talks quietly with Hephæstus ; and even Ares, the dreadful God of War, has forgotten spear and shield, and lounges at his ease, with hands clasped round his right knee. Close behind Athene, a priest takes the old robe of the goddess, which is to be replaced by a new one, folds it up, and hands it to a lad. Elders and maidens stand around, waiting for the arrival of the great procession.

Pass round the corner, and, as you move along, the procession seems to advance to meet you. Young men lead up the oxen and sheep for sacrifice ; flute-players and harpers marshal in war-chariots, palm-bearing victors, and heavy-armed infantry with spear and shield. Behind them come the knights—gallant young

E. Alinari, Photo

THE CHARIOTEER OF DELPHI. (*See p.* 87.)

men of the best blood of Athens, sitting their fiery barebacked steeds with ease and grace, their mantles flying in the wind. Farther back still are others, just getting ready to join the march, attendants holding the impatient horses, a young knight stooping to tie the thong of his sandal, which has got loosened. The whole thing is of the most exquisite simplicity and grace—just the actual scene as it will be witnessed in a few days, and now fixed for ever on the walls of Athene's house.

If we may enter the eastern shrine, we shall see the glory of glories. For here, in silent, lonely state, stands the great ivory and gold statue of the goddess that Pheidias has wrought to dwell in the midst of her own city. Thirty-nine feet high she towers, from her carven sandal to the peak of her triple-crested golden helmet. The face, with its lovely ground tint of creamy-white, is coloured to the life—blue eyes, red lips, golden locks escaping from beneath the shadowing helmet. She bears £150,000 worth of pure gold on shield and helm and breastplate, all so fastened that it can be detached and weighed if need be. So Pericles has ordered Pheidias to make it, lest base men should say that we have cheated the gods. Athene, for all her vastness and splendour, is not terrible; she looks down with quiet benignity upon her worshippers, as though satisfied with their devotion. And well she may be, for never since men have worshipped the gods has so splendid a temple and so costly and beautiful a statue been set up, and scarcely ever shall there be seen such another as long as the world stands.

CHAPTER VI

THE SAILOR-STATE OF GREECE

Of all the states that have held empire in the world, none have a closer resemblance to one another than Britain and Athens. Of course, the differences between the two are also very great. The Athenian Empire was never more than a little cluster of petty island communities, with a few small strips of mainland colony attached to them, and the dominion of Athens, even over this little group, was only that of the leading member of a confederation. But the real point of resemblance between our vast empire and the tiny Athenian one is that both depended entirely upon sea-power. As in our own case, it was sea-power that built up the Athenian Empire, sea-power that made it prosperous and held it together, sea-power that maintained the strength of the Imperial city. And, as a lesson and a warning to ourselves, it was the loss of sea-power that at once and for ever broke in pieces the empire that the command of the sea had held together. When the Athenian fleet fought and lost its last great battle at Ægospotami, there was no recovery for Athens. Her empire fell to pieces at the very rumour of the breaking of the bond that held it together; and the city fell, without another stroke for its liberty, before Lysander and his victorious Peloponnesians.

> "The fleet of Athens was her all in all . . .
> And in her fleet her fate."

What sort of a thing, then, was the fleet of the great sea-power of the ancient world? Well, the best way to see it will be to go down to the Peiræus, and

board a galley which is sailing to join the squadron at Naupaktus under Admiral Phormio. Phormio has only a small fleet, which is watching the Peloponnesian fleet at the mouth of the Corinthian Gulf. Our ship will bring him up exactly to twenty ships of the line ; but if his numbers are small, the ships and crews are the very best that Athens can muster, and Phormio himself is our greatest sailor—the Nelson of the Athenian navy.

Here is our galley, then, lying in the basin, ready to sail as soon as we get on board. She is not a very big ship, compared with modern monsters ; but she looks very smart and business-like, with her long, low, black hull, and crimson decorations at bow and stern, her narrow beam, and her long rows of polished oars. From stem to stern she measures about 130 feet, her beam is about 17 feet, and she draws between 6 and 7 feet of water. In the ancient days of the Trojan War, the galley was only a long, open boat with a decked forecastle and poop ; and even the triremes that fought the Persians at Salamis were only half-decked ; but now our galleys are decked from end to end, and are much more seaworthy than the old style of vessel.

All our battleships nowadays are triremes ; that is to say, they have three long lines of oars, whose rowers sit diagonally, one above the other, in rather cramped quarters. The lowest bank of rowers is called the thalamites ; there are 54 of them, 27 a side, and while they have the advantage of pulling the shortest oars, they have the double disadvantage of having the stuffiest quarters and of being in the greatest danger if anything goes wrong. If your ship gets rammed in a battle, the poor thalamite hasn't very much of a

chance when the enemy's beak comes crashing in through the rending timbers, and the stricken ship begins to settle down. He is like the stoker on a modern battleship: whoever else may go, he goes first.

Above the thalamites, sit the rowers of the middle bank, the zygites, who pull a somewhat longer oar. There are 54 of them also; and above them are the thranites, the upper-deck oarsmen, whose oars are longest of all. There are 62 of them, 31 a side, because the overhang of the ship gives more room on the upper deck. Altogether, then, we have 170 regular oarsmen; and besides these there are 30 spare oars, which can be used in an emergency. The oars are not very heavy—they average, perhaps, 15 feet in length, and each man can carry his oar over his shoulder, and his rowing-cushion under his arm, if he has to go ashore. The loom of each oar is weighted so as to make it balance well and pull easily, and they all work against tholes, to which they are fastened with a leather loop.

On deck we are not much bothered with top-hamper. There is a big mainmast with large square sail, and a small foremast with a foresail to help in casting the ship's head round; but we only use these when making a passage, and before a battle they will be struck and sent ashore. Besides our trierarch, who has to fit out the ship for sea, and keep her in good condition for a year at his own expense, his navigating officer, boatswain, and a handful of seamen to work the sails, we carry a dozen marines in full armour, helmet, breastplate, shield, spear, and sword, whose business is to do the fighting, if we get fast alongside an enemy ship. But we shall never do that

Anderson, Photo

THE DISK-THROWER OF MYRON. (*See p.* 88.)

if we can help it. It is only clumsy Peloponnesian land-lubbers who try to make a sea-fight into a bad imitation of a land battle. We are seamen, and we make our ship the weapon to do the fighting with. It is a case of skilful manœuvring till we get our opponent at a disadvantage, and then either ramming him on the side or stern, or sweeping diagonally along his banks of oars, breaking them all, and leaving him helpless. Perhaps you may see something of this game when we have joined Phormio at Naupaktus; for he is the great master of all such dodges.

At our bow, on the water-line, we carry a bronze-shod ram with three teeth. Our rams are not so heavy as the Peloponnesian ones; for their idea of ramming is to blunder bow to bow against your opponent, and so strike him just where he is strongest. We, on the other hand, prefer to do the business more artistically, and our lightness and speed enable us, with good handling, to choose out the weak places where a blow can be got home with most damage to the enemy and least to ourselves. Even so the ram sometimes gets torn off and left behind in the hole it has made, and the whole ship has to be strengthened before battle by girdling cables passed right round her from stem to stern, to keep her timbers from opening when she strikes her foe.

Altogether, then, you can see that we are a pretty full ship, with at least 200 men, stores, and equipment packed into a space only 130 by 17 feet. It takes some planning to get and to keep order. How, above all, can these 170 oarsmen, pulling oars of three different lengths and weights, be kept together, and made to pull, and ease, and backwater, just at the right moment and in proper order? Watch, and you will see; for now we are

just ready to cast off, and you may be sure our trierarch will want to go out in style under all the critical eyes that are watching along the piers. The boatswain takes his stand amidships, and beside him stands a flute-player, who strikes up a loud clear tune with a sharply marked rhythm that fits the swing and stroke of an oar. Now the trierarch, or his navigating officer on the poop, makes a sign, and the boatswain lifts his hand and marks time, as if he were conducting an orchestra ; and at each rise and fall of the flute-player's tune, he chants " Op-O-óp." " Op," and the oars dig into the water, and are pulled through, " O-óp," and the rowers reach forward again for the next stroke. The foam swirls round about our ram as the galley gathers way ; the monotonous chant and the wail of the flute grow faster; the rowers themselves, as they begin to get their backs into it, sing out a rhythmical chanty, " Rhup-pa-pai," which helps to keep them all together; and the galley sweeps out between the pier heads, and lays her course southwards for the long weary round of the Peloponnese to where Admiral Phormio is waiting for us at Naupaktus, and big things may soon be happening.

And now, one dark morning, just before dawn, a week later, we, and the rest of the twenty Athenian ships, are tossing in the middle of the Corinthian Gulf waiting for our friends the Peloponnesians. Yesterday we sighted them creeping along the northern shore of the Peloponnese, forty-seven triremes, with a number of store-ships and transports, evidently intending to land troops on the Akarnanian shore, which we are defending. Much to their surprise, for they never dreamed that Phormio would dare to bring out his twenty ships against their forty-seven, our admiral put to sea at

DÆDALUS AND ICARUS. *Page 10.*

once, and sailed parallel with them all the rest of the day, till they almost reached the mouth of the Gulf. Then they put about, and sailed eastwards again, and pretended to lay up for the night. But Phormio was not to be taken in; and so we have kept the sea all night, expecting to catch them making a surprise attempt to cross in the darkness.

Now our lookout ship signals that the enemy fleet is coming, and gradually, as the dim light begins to grow, we see the forty-seven great hulks, with the store-ships behind them, heading northwards across the strait. We form in line ahead, and go sweeping down to meet them. See, they have caught sight of our line, and now they gather, like a flock of frightened sheep, into a great circle. The transports are gathered in the middle of the circle, and the warships range themselves like the spokes of a wheel, with their sterns inward and their beaks pointing out, while five fast galleys are kept in reserve within the circle, ready to dash out on any ship of ours that ventures too near. If they can keep their circle unbroken, we shall find it no easy job to attack.

Phormio, however, knows the kind of sailors he has to deal with, and the skill of his own men. We sweep right round the circle, close under their bows, mocking and jeering at them as we pass, and then, going about, we pass round them again closer still. The poor Peloponnesians huddle closer and closer together, expecting us every moment to attack, and the circle begins to get irregular and unsteady. But our admiral has no intention of attacking—till his own time comes. He is waiting for the land-gale that rises with the sun; and see, here it comes, lifting the water into foam, and driving the huddled ships of the

Peloponnesians together. The galleys begin to run foul of one another and of the transports. Half the crews are poling their boats off from one another instead of sitting to their oars, and what with shouts and swearing and mutual reproaches, the oarsmen who are ready can't hear the boatswain's orders or the sound of the flute.

All is confusion, and just when the muddle is at its worst, Phormio gives the signal to attack, and dashes his own galley through a gap in the circle into the centre. Whirling round on her heel, as the starboard oarsmen pull ahead while the port oars backwater, the admiral's galley dashes her beak into the defenceless quarter of a Peloponnesian galley bearing an admiral's sign; and the enemy goes down like a stone. Behind the admiral the rest of the squadron follows fast, some dashing right through the broken circle, and ramming the sterns of the enemy galleys on the other side, some sweeping close alongside an enemy, drawing in their own oars as they come, and crashing through the oar-banks of their opponents from bow to stern, smashing all the oars, and hurling the wretched rowers over one another in heaps.

Almost before the Peloponnesians have time to realize what has happened to them, twelve of their best ships are in our hands, and the rest of their big fleet is flying for dear life back to the shelter of the coast from which it came. Without the loss of a single ship, almost without the loss of a single man, our twenty galleys have beaten the forty-seven of the enemy ; because we know our business as sailors, and the men of the Peloponnese, good fighters on land, have a lot to learn when it comes to fighting on sea.

CHAPTER VII

THE SOLDIER-STATE OF GREECE

ONCE upon a time, so Herodotus, the gossipy old Greek historian, tells us, there were twelve kings in Egypt, eleven of whom united to banish to the marshes the twelfth, Psammitichos by name, because they were jealous of him. Now Psammitichos (his real Egyptian name was Psamtek) consulted an oracle of the gods as to how he might best be revenged on the eleven ; and the oracle told him that when brazen men came out of the sea he would find vengeance on his adversaries. And so it befell that while Psamtek was doubting in himself what this should mean, a pirate-ship was driven by stress of weather on the coast of Egypt, and certain Ionians and Karians, in bronze harness, landed from her, and began to plunder the land. And when news of these brazen men from the sea was brought to Psamtek, he knew that the word of the oracle had come to pass, and, taking these Ionians and Karians into his service, by their help he overcame his enemies, and made himself king of all the land of Egypt.

And with that we may leave King Psamtek and his brazen men from the sea ; for I have only told you of him in order to show you what it was about the Greek soldier that struck all the other nations of the ancient world with wonder and fear, and made him the terror of the battlefield, so that a mere handful of Greek hoplites turned the tide of many a fierce conflict, and drove great hosts to flight. It was not that the Greek was braver than other races; there were no braver men than the Persians, who yet were beaten so often by the Greeks. It was not that they had such

skilful generals, for the average Greek general was no great master of the art of war.

It was first, that the Greek, long before most other races, had learned the meaning and the power of discipline, and, next, that the Greek alone—why, it is difficult to explain—realized the value and the power of armour. Clad in his brazen panoply, the Greek heavy-infantryman was as superior to the ordinary warrior of his time, Persian or Egyptian, as the steel-clad knight to a common, leather-clad billman, or one of Cortes' hidalgoes to a feather-bedecked Mexican warrior. A solid line of Greek heavy-infantry was a rock on which wave after wave of barbarian courage broke itself in vain.

Later, the time came when Philip and Alexander of Macedon developed a real army of professional soldiers, strictly disciplined and well armed; and when that happened, the very best troops of the old Greek states proved powerless to withstand the shock of the phalanx and the Macedonian lancers, just as the Macedonians, in their turn, had to yield to the iron ranks of the Roman legions. But, before that time, the old Greek territorial, Spartan or Athenian, had done the work appointed for him in the world, and done it well. It was the brazen men of Lacedæmon and Athens, at Marathon and Platæa, who settled that Europe was not to be ruled by Persian satraps, but was to be free to work out her own destiny.

Well, then, what did these old Greek soldiers look like, how were they armed, and how were they marshalled, in the days when the Hellene was the first-class fighting man of the world? Suppose we take a look at a young Spartan soldier, as he receives the summons to join his platoon, and march out with

the rest of the army to defend his fatherland or to attack its enemies. I have chosen a Spartan because the Spartans were just as easily first among Greek soldiers as the Athenians were first among sailors; but what I have to tell you would apply, with only slight differences, to any of the other states of Greece.

Young Kallikratidas, then, has got notice to join his "Enomoty" (what we would call his platoon) to-day, carrying three days' supplies. Let us watch him as he equips himself in the harness of what the Greeks called a "hoplite," and we call a heavy-infantryman. First of all, he puts on a leather jerkin, fitting close to the body, but without sleeves. From the belt of the jerkin there hangs down all round a number of thick leather thongs, studded with bronze. These reach halfway to the knee, and are meant to protect the lower part of the body and the thighs. Next, he has to put on the greaves, which defend the legs from the knee downwards. They come before the cuirass, because it is not very easy to stoop when you have a bronze corselet on. The greaves are padded leggings of light bronze plate, which open at the back, and are fastened by straps and buckles below the knee and above the ankle. Now comes the cuirass. It is a breastplate and backplate of bronze, which is buckled round the body by means of leather straps, and is finished off by broad metal shoulder-flaps. A stout leather belt, quilted with bronze, goes round the waist over the cuirass, and holds everything together. The helmet completes the body armour. There are several different types of helmet worn, but Kallikratidas prefers that known as the Corinthian helmet. It has a nose-piece and two broad and deep cheek-pieces, so that when it is drawn down over the face nothing can be

seen except the wearer's eyes and mouth. Generally, of course, it is worn tilted back on the head, and is only drawn over the face when going into action. The helmet is topped with a heavy crest of crimson horse-hair.

Kallikratidas throws his sword-belt over his shoulder and hooks on the sword. It is a short, straight blade about 20 inches in length, pointed and double-edged. He slips his left arm through one of the loops inside the curve of his shield, and grasps the other loop in his left hand. The shield is a big oval, about 4 feet long, made up of several thicknesses of bull's hide, studded and bossed with bronze, and with a bronze rim round it. The centre of the buckler is painted with a big **V**, the old-fashioned Greek **L**, standing for Lacedæmon. The young soldier takes in his hand a seven-foot spear of ashwood, tipped with steel, slings over his shoulder a haversack with three days' rations of meal, salt, onions, and garlic, and he is ready to join his platoon—a striking and formidable figure as he clanks off to the gathering place.

Let us follow him there, and see the arrangements of a Spartan army. His enomoty is 36 strong ; four of these platoons make a Pentekostys—what we would call a company ; and four pentekostyes make a Lochos, which you may consider as roughly equal to a battalion. The lochos, generally of about 500 spears, is commanded by a Lochage, who has authority over the lieutenants and captains who command the smaller units; and above the lochages comes the Polemarch, or General, who may be, and very usually is, one of the two Kings of Sparta.

Now, it is this system of small platoons, with subaltern officers, making up companies and regiments, each with its own rank of commander, that has helped to make the Spartan army so efficient. The other Greek

states have no such system. Each tribe, in an Athenian or a Theban army, makes a regiment of its own, with no subdivisions, and so the unit is far too bulky and clumsy to be easily handled; and the words of command, which in our army are passed along quietly and quickly from platoon to platoon, have with them to be shouted down the ranks by the general's heralds. So our line is a far more supple and flexible thing than theirs, and, even if the worst happens, and the line gets broken, our compact regiments, or even companies and platoons, stick better together than the unsubdivided line of the other states. One other advantage we have: the Spartan is perpetually drilling. The carrying and the use of arms is the whole business of his life. And so Kallikratidas and his companions are not only hardy athletic men—the average Athenian is probably quite as good as any of them in that respect—but they use their weapons with the ease, like second nature, that comes from constant practice; and all their movements are carried out with a rapidity and orderliness that nothing but constant drill can give.

The heavy-armed free Spartan citizens are the backbone of the Spartan army. There may not be a very great number of them—two or three thousand would be considered quite a respectable army; but then each citizen has several heavy-armed slaves of the class called "helots" in the field with him, so that, just as a lance, in the Middle Ages, meant a knight and four or five well-armed men-at-arms, so a Spartan hoplite meant a heavy-armed citizen, and a group of auxiliaries as well. In addition to the line of spearmen, there will be light troops, bowmen, and slingers on the wings, and a small body of cavalry. The cavalry is not of very much account, for the riders have neither

saddle nor stirrups, and sit only upon a cloth fastened with a tight girth. Consequently they can only strike with the weight of arm and lance, instead of putting all the weight of horse and man into the thrust. If a Greek knight were to charge with couched lance like a knight of the Middle Ages, he would be sent flying over his horse's tail by the force of his own onset.

Neither do we set much store by the light-armed infantry. Bowmen and slingers are rather looked down upon, and have generally comparatively little to say in the decision of a battle. Later on, Iphikrates, the Athenian captain of Free Companies, will show us that light-armed men, capably led, may be more than a match even for a Spartan regiment of heavy-armed spearmen; but the Spartan is the father of all Conservatives, and sticks to the old ways to the last, just because they are old.

When our army comes face to face with the enemy we shall form up for battle. It is a simple business, with no refinements of manœuvring. The line is formed, eight or twelve deep, as the case may be, and there will be a good deal of squeezing towards the right flank, for the men on that flank know that their right side is unshielded, and so try if possible to outflank the men opposite them in the enemy's line. Meanwhile the enemy is doing the same thing on his side, so that the lines wriggle about for a little before we settle down fairly opposite one another. Then our king makes sacrifice of a goat, the flutes begin to play the Song of Kastor, and we all march forward in step, singing our war-song, and gradually quickening till we are charging at the double.

The two lines of heavy bronze-clad men meet with a crash, and for a while we sway backwards and forwards,

"BRAZEN MEN FROM THE SEA." *Page 47.*

thrusting and parrying, trying our utmost to break the opposite line. There is no great slaughter at first, for the close lines and the heavy armour make killing difficult ; but by and by the lines begin to get mingled, spear-thrusts and sword-cuts get home, and men are falling faster. Now the line opposite seems to be melting away, and Kallikratidas and his companions drive ahead with renewed eagerness. Soon the enemy is quite broken up, and his spearmen are fleeing for their lives, some of them throwing away their heavy shields as they run. The battle is ours ; but before we have pursued very far the trumpet calls us back again, for the Spartans consider it "neither gentlemanly nor Hellenic to cut and slay those who yield and retire."

To-morrow our opponents will send in a herald asking permission to take up and bury their dead under truce ; and when we have buried our own, and set up a trophy of captured arms, we shall march home again victorious.

Such is a battle between two Greek armies—one of the simplest things in the way of tactics that you can imagine—a simple case of two lines of armoured men pushing at one another with spear, sword, and shield, till one line gets broken, or loses heart and runs away. The great merit of the Spartan soldier was that of all the Greeks he dreamed the least of running away. He preferred to be killed ; and that dogged courage of his made him almost invincible on the battlefield, so that most armies that had to face him were half-beaten before the battle was joined, at the very thought of meeting Spartans.

So for generations the Spartan remained the War-Lord of Greece, until at last there came into the head of Epaminondas, captain of the host of Thebes, the idea that the old line-to-line business was not the last

word in warfare. When he and his Thebans faced the Spartan line on the field of Leuktra, he changed the whole tactics of battle. Holding back a great part of his line, merely to watch the troops opposite them, he formed the rest into a column fifty deep, and flung this solid mass of bronze-clad men upon the right wing of the twelve-deep Spartan line. Bravely as the Spartans fought, they were overwhelmed by sheer weight, their line broken in twain and driven from the field. The lesson was clear, but not clear enough to the stubborn Spartan mind. Nine years later Spartan and Theban met again at Mantineia. Epaminondas played the game of Leuktra over again without a variation; and the Spartans showed that they had learned nothing by their first defeat, and Mantineia ended as Leuktra had done.

It was the end of Sparta as a great military power; and the soldier-state of Greece fell from its high estate because of sheer stupidity. Her men were as brave and well trained as ever; but all their bravery was thrown away because they were commanded by men whose generalship was no better or more adaptable than that of a respectable drill-sergeant. Victory in the future was to go to armies that could manœuvre, as well as fight stubbornly and die bravely.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREEK GAMES

THERE is one feature of the old Hellenic life that should make it seem familiar and friendly to us. The Greek was a thorough sportsman, who loved athletic games of all sorts, played them with all his heart and

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HORSEMEN FROM THE PARTHENON FRIEZE. (*See pp.* 88—89.)

strength, and, best of all, played them, in the main, for the love and honour of the thing, not for the prize. In all this he was very different from the Roman, who was no true sportsman, in spite of his Circus Maximus and his Colosseum. The Roman's idea of sport was to sit by the fifty thousand in a place like the Colosseum, and watch gladiators hacking one another to death, boxers smashing one another's faces to a bloody pulp with hard leather gloves, weighted with lead and iron, or poor creatures, with no weapons to speak of, fighting a hopeless battle in the arena against fierce wild beasts. He played no games himself, and the games he liked to watch must have plenty of blood and death about them.

But the Greek was different. He belonged to a race of athletes. Games, to begin with, were part of his religion. All his great athletic festivals—the Olympic, the Nemean, the Isthmian, the Delphic, the Panathenaic—were festivals in honour of the gods. They began and closed with solemn sacrifices and religious rites, and through all the competitions ran the idea of offering the beauty and strength of perfectly trained bodies to the glory of God.

Moreover every Greek, whether he were competing in the great games or not, was more or less of an athlete himself, and rather more than less. For every Greek was a soldier, who had to be ready at a moment's notice to take the field in defence of his country and his home, and who had to keep himself always fit to bear his heavy armour, and to endure all kinds of physical strain. So athletics were a regular part, and no small part, of his education. Constant practice in running and jumping kept him sound and supple in wind and limb; throwing the diskos and the spear

was the best of practice for the battlefield; wrestling and boxing kept him hard, and trained his hand and eye for the stern work of actual fighting. So, of the countless thousands who looked on at the games at Olympia or Delphi, each man was really a trained expert, who understood and appreciated each feat of skill or strength, and was a prompt and severe judge of every mean dodge or underhand trick.

Besides, there were two features about the Greek games which distinguished them honourably from a great deal that goes by the name of sport nowadays. There was no betting, and there was no pot-hunting, at least, at the great festivals, and in the best days of Greek athletics. Some of the smaller local festivals, indeed, offered handsome prizes in order to attract competitors; but this was looked upon as quite below the dignity of the great games. At Olympia the prize was a crown of wild olive leaves; at Delphi, a crown of bay leaves; at the Isthmian and the Nemean games, a wreath of wild celery or pine-leaves; while at the Panathenæa the victors were rewarded with painted jars of oil. To-day we count these Panathenaic painted amphoræ priceless treasures of art; but, as things went then, they were very humble rewards.

The great thing that the Greek strove for in his games was to bring credit and honour to his native city. Each competitor was regarded as the representative of his city; when the herald proclaimed the victor's name, he proclaimed also the name of the city to which he belonged, and the whole state shared in his success, and gloried in it. When he came home after his victory, his fellow-citizens came out in procession to meet him, led him in through a breach specially made in the walls, freed him from

taxes for the rest of his life, or sometimes, as at Athens, granted him a free seat for all meals at the Prytaneum, along with the highest and best of the land, as long as he lived. On one occasion a famous athlete of Croton, named Astylus, who had won races for his town at two successive Olympiads, entered himself the third time as a Syracusan, in order to curry favour with the despot of the great Sicilian city. In their indignation at such meanness, the Crotoniats destroyed the statue which they had set up to the victorious athlete, and turned the house which they had given him into a common prison. Such an action shows how keenly the Greek felt that the glory of the victor belonged to his city even more than to himself.

In the days when Greek athletics were at their best, the greatest poets of the land did not think it beneath their dignity to sing their sweetest songs in honour of the victorious runner or wrestler, nor the greatest painter or sculptor to record the figure of the champion. Some of the noblest works of Greek art that have come down to us are the statues of athletes—the diskos-thrower at the top of his swing, the racing charioteer standing stiff and stark in his long straight robe, the runner scraping the dust and oil from his limbs after the race, or binding upon his head the garland of victory. And the wisest of the Greeks held that nothing taught better than athletic sports the virtue that they held in greatest reverence. I can't find a single word to translate it to you; but it meant respect to the gods, to your fellow-men, to yourself, reverence, modesty, courtesy, the sense of honour and fairness which distinguishes the true soldier and sportsman from the bully and the cheat. Some of the Greek games—boxing, wrestling, and the rough-and-

tumble that they called the "pankration"—demanded a very high sense of honour and self-restraint, if they were not to end in sheer brutality; and the Greeks held, perhaps rightly, that the man who trained himself to take part honourably in such sports was likely to be honourable in other things also.

Altogether, I fancy that there never was a nation of better sportsmen than the Greeks at their best, and that no people ever had a higher idea of what true sport could do for a man or of what it required of him. Unfortunately, like the rest of us, the Greeks were not always at their best. Even in the palmy days of the games, there were cheats who bought and sold some of the competitions, and at the entrance to the Stadium at Olympia there stood an ominous row of bronze statues of Zeus, paid for by the heavy fines exacted from those who had tried to cheat in the games, and bearing the warning inscription that "not with money, but with speed of foot and strength of body must prizes be won at Olympia."

Bit by bit professionalism, too, began to creep in, and in Greece, as everywhere else, it was the death of all true sport. Gradually, the Greeks degenerated from a nation of athletes into a nation who looked on at the feats of professional racers, boxers, and wrestlers, and made heroes out of the paid strong men. In our own days we have heard Mr. Kipling telling us bitter things about "the flannelled fool at the wicket, the muddied oaf at the goal." It is strange to hear a greater poet of twenty-three centuries before saying much the same kind of thing to the Athenians of his day. Listen to Euripides, the great Greek dramatist: "Of all the countless evils throughout Hellas, there is none worse than the race of athletes. In youth they

E. Alinari, Photo

THE HERMES OF PRAXITELES. (*See p.* 90.)

strut about in splendour, the pride of their city, but when bitter old age comes upon them they are cast aside like threadbare garments. It is folly for the Greeks to make a great gathering to see useless creatures like these, whose god is in their belly. What good does a man do to his city by winning a prize for wrestling, or speed, or quoit-heaving, or jaw-smiting? Will they fight the enemy with quoits? Will they drive the enemy out of their country without spears by kicking? No one plays antics like these when he stands near the steel. Crowns should be given to the good and wise, to him who guides his city best—a temperate man and just." I am afraid that Euripides got few to listen to his warning, and Greek athletics and Greek freedom decayed and went down together to destruction.

And now, after all this long story about the sportsmanship of the Greeks, I must try to tell you something of what their games were really like. Suppose that we travel away to the western side of the Peloponnese, where, in the territory of the little town of Elis, by the side of the river Alpheus, the greatest of all the Greek athletic festivals was held, at a quiet, out-of-the-way spot called Olympia, with neither town nor village near it. So famous and so sacred was the Olympic Festival, that the Greeks reckoned all their dates from the year (776 B.C.) when it was first properly organized, and the First Olympiad was counted the beginning of Greek history.

We make our journey in the late summer of a year about the middle of the fifth century B.C., for the festival takes place at the second full moon after the summer solstice. Olympia has now reached the height of its fame and splendour. Libon, the great architect

of Elis, has completed the magnificent temple of Zeus, which is the glory of the Altis, the sacred enclosure; and the new Stadium for the foot-races and the Hippodrome for the horse and the chariot races have been laid out. If we have luck, we may hear Pindar singing one of his odes in honour of the victors, and see some of the bronze statues that Myron and Polykleitus have made to celebrate the champions of the arena.

Several weeks before the festival is due, three truce-bearers of Zeus set out from Elis, crowned with olive and bearing herald's staves. They have journeyed to all the states and cities of Greece proclaiming the holy truce, and inviting all the Greeks to the festival. For three months, from the day on which they set out, no Greek dares to lift a finger against anyone, whether competitor or visitor, journeying to or from Olympia, no matter though he be his bitterest enemy, and within the sacred territory of Elis itself none may bear arms on any pretext.

The competitors have gradually been drifting into Elis for the thirty days' final training under the eyes of the judges, which is compulsory on all. The judges themselves have been trained for ten months in their sacred duties, and only those competitors who come up to their standard will be allowed to compete. Now that training is over and the games are about to begin, they call together all the competitors who have entered for the events, and speak thus to them. "If you have exercised yourself in a manner worthy of the Olympic festival, if you have been guilty of no slothful or ignoble act, go on with a good courage. You, who have not so practised, go whither you will."

A few days before the full moon the whole multitude

THE WESTERN END OF THE ACROPOLIS SEEN FROM BELOW THE PNYX.

that has been gathering into Elis sets out for the march to Olympia. The sacred way leads down from Elis to the coast, and then follows the valley of the Alpheus, and the journey takes two days. First come the Judges, the Hellanodicæ, as they are called, and the other officials of the games; then the athletes and trainers, the horses and chariots, with the owners, jockeys, and charioteers; last comes a motley crowd of spectators from all parts of the Greek world. Glittering tyrants from the great Greek colonies of Sicily rub shoulders with peasants from Arcadia or fishermen from the coast. Poets with their latest odes ready for recitation, philosophers eager to dispute with rival teachers, merchants on the outlook for fresh business, and swindlers seeking for fools to cheat, all ranks and classes of the Greek world from Marseilles to Trebizond and from Thrace to North Africa are represented. Each state has its own official embassy, and each embassy strives to outdo its rivals in splendour. How the vast and motley crowd was housed it is difficult to see, for at Olympia there were no houses save the temples of the gods and the treasuries, or official residences, of the various states. Probably most slept in tents, or in the open air, for the five days of the festival —a pleasant enough experience in a Greek summer.

On the first day of the festival, there are no competitions; but all the judges, the competitors, their trainers, and everyone else connected with the sports, gather in the great Council Chamber. There stands a statue of Zeus the Hearer of Oaths, a thunderbolt in his hand to remind evildoers of judgment. Before this statue a pig is sacrificed, and, over the offering, they all swear in turn to give just decisions, and to use no unworthy means to secure victory in the sports.

For the rest of the day we are at liberty to do as we choose. We can stroll about through the Altis, and watch the athletes offering sacrifices at the altars of the various gods or heroes whom they specially fancy, and praying for success in the games, or we can take a look into the sculptor's workshop where Pheidias is hard at work on the great ivory and gold statue of Zeus that is to sit in Libon's temple. If your tastes are literary, here is a new sensation for you—Herodotus, the historian, from Halikarnassus, is reciting that part of his history that tells of the Persian Wars, and the crowds around him are wild with delight as they listen to the story of the great deeds of their forefathers. Herodotus is a great man; but standing there in the crowd is a young fellow, Thucydides, son of Olorus, the Athenian, who is destined to be greater still. To-day as he stands there, he is drinking in the inspiration that will set him also writing when the time comes—a history that the world will never let die. All the news of the world is being passed from group to group, and friends long separated from one another are renewing old acquaintance, and telling the story of their fortunes in the colonies. So the busy, bustling scene goes on till the night falls, and the full moon casts its pale light over the vast gathering.

Next day the sports begin early in the morning. The boxing and wrestling take place in the Festal Square before the Altar of Zeus; the foot-races, the throwing of the diskos and the spear, and the long jump, in the Stadium; the chariot-races in the Hippodrome. Huge crowds of spectators are gathered on every point of vantage to view the contests. There isn't much in the way of comfort; you have to sit or stand where and how you can, on the banks of the

Stadium or the Hippodrome, or on the rows of steps beneath the treasuries, where the embassies of the states are housed; and there is nothing to shelter you from the sun and the dust. But nobody seems to care much about discomfort; we are all too eager to watch our own special champions, and the great crowds grow wild with excitement, leap from their seats, wave their arms frantically, and shout till they are hoarse, as the runners flash up the Stadium in the sprint, or as a famous wrestler flings his opponent clean over his shoulder with the trick that we call "the flying mare."

Perhaps the quaintest of all the contests, as it is one of the most popular, is the hoplites' race, run by men in full armour. It is only a race up the Stadium, round the turning-pillar, and back again, 400 yards or so; but it is no joke to run even 400 yards at top speed under a blazing sun, and clad in a heavy bronze helmet and greaves, with a big clumsy shield on your left arm. Here are the runners, twenty of them, crouching on their marks, ready for the blast of the trumpet. The starting-line runs almost from side to side of the Stadium. It is a stone sill, made of slabs about eighteen inches wide, sunk into the ground level with the rest of the course. From end to end of the sill run two parallel grooves, about seven inches apart, and the runners toe these grooves, left foot foremost, crouching a little forward, with the right arm stretched out to keep balance. They are separated from one another by pillars set in sockets four feet apart, so that there can be no jostling at the start, whatever may be the case at the turn.

Now the starters have got all the twenty safely settled on their marks, and, at the sharp blast of the trumpet they are off, clattering away up the Stadium

in a cloud of dust. The best place to see the fun is near the turning-post, for while the other foot-racers have each a special post, marked out by a particular colour, to run round, the poor hoplites have only one post for the whole twenty, and as the field comes thundering up to the turn there is plenty of jostling and elbowing and confusion. One runner trips over his neighbour's greave, and comes down in the dust with a resounding clash, another drops his shield, and has to stop to pick it up again, the catch of another man's greave bursts, and he falls out in great disgust. Now all who have kept their feet, and stuck to their equipment, are round the post, and they stream away down the Stadium towards the winning-post. Well to the front is a big black-bearded fellow, with a slim clean-shaven lad hard at his heels. It is only a few yards to the line now, and black-beard, as he runs, snatches off the heavy helmet and carries it in his hand, looking round with a glance of triumph at his rival. He had better have waited till he had passed the line, for the change of action has checked his speed for a moment. The youngster draws up to his shoulder, flashes past him, and crosses the line in front of the judges—first by inches. A great roar of laughter goes up all round the Stadium as black-beard flings down his helmet and shield in disgust. The trumpeter blows a ringing blast, the herald steps forward and announces that the hoplites' race has been won by Callisthenes, son of Aristides, of the city of Athens ; and, amidst thunders of applause, one of the judges places the crown of wild olive on the head of the successful runner, whose father comes forward beaming with joy, and leads his son off the course.

Now, if you care, we may take a look at the men

who are contesting the long jump, which is part of the competition which the Greeks called the "Pentathlon," or "Five Contest," because it included five different events, of which the victor had to win at least three. The five were the foot-race, the long-jump, throwing the diskos, throwing the javelin, and wrestling, so that the winner of the pentathlon had to be a good all-round athlete. In fact, with the possible exception of the chariot-race, there is no contest more popular than the pentathlon, and no higher honour in the games than to win it.

Long-jumping is rather wearisome to watch for long, so we shall only look on for a minute or two. The Greek jumper comes up to his mark with a short run, and as he leaps he helps his spring by the skilful swinging of the jumping-weights which he carries in his hands—things rather like light dumb-bells. The ground on which he lands is carefully dug up with a pick, so that he may have a soft landing. But the story goes that Phaÿllus, the most famous of Greek jumpers, once broke his leg by leaping 5 feet beyond the prepared ground. That means that his leap measured 55 feet; but I am afraid something must have been wrong with the measuring-tape that day. No doubt there were fine jumpers among a race who practised jumping so much, but half the length of Phaÿllus's jump would be a fine performance even for the best leaper.

Strangest of all the games, to our minds, is that called the "Pankration," which is a sort of mixture of boxing, wrestling, throttling, pummelling, kicking, and every other means which a fighter can adopt to force his opponent to give in. Biting and gouging are almost the only tricks that are forbidden; apart

from these, you may use almost any device you like to get your opponent down and keep him down, till he holds up his hand as a sign that he has had enough. It sounds very brutal to us, and indeed it is brutal—the only Greek game that is almost as savage and as cruel as were all the Roman sports. One of the famous legends of the games tells how a pankratiast named Arrhichion was being strangled by an opponent who had forced him to the ground, and was choking the life out of him. The dying athlete caught his enemy's foot, and twisted it out of the socket with such force as to oblige him to yield ; then he fell back and died, victorious even in death. No doubt the game tried the endurance and pluck of the competitors to the utmost ; but at best it must have been an ugly business.

One feature of the games is very noticeable. Our athletes of to-day often wear little enough in the way of clothing ; but no Greek athlete ever wore any clothing at all. Runners, wrestlers, boxers, diskos-throwers—all were stripped to the bronzed and well-oiled skin. For the Greek prided himself on the beauty of the well-trained body, and delighted to expose it to the sunshine and the air. To him the only shame about the body was that it should be weak, deformed, or out of condition, and he scorned the Persian for his flabby muscles, and his white skin always muffled in flowing robes. A gathering of Greek athletes showed the human frame in its highest and most perfect development—an assemblage of living statues.

So, day after day, for five days, the sports went on, varied in the evenings by great banquets and festal processions under the light of the full moon. On the last evening the victors were all entertained at a great

public banquet by the officials of the festival. The next morning they set out on their homeward journey, to be welcomed, on their return to their native cities, with honours and dignities greater than any king could claim. The great gathering melted away to all the ends of the Greek world, and Olympia was left silent and deserted, till four years later the next Olympiad drew fresh multitudes to the holy place again.

CHAPTER IX

THE THEATRE

Of all people who ever lived, I suppose the Greeks, and above all the Athenians, were fondest of the theatre. To see a good play, well acted, was one of the greatest delights of life to them. Everybody who could went to the theatre, everyone was a keen critic of the plays that were presented there; and the Athenian theatre has given us some of the greatest masterpieces of human genius. We have some noble pages in the story of our theatre, too, and we count the plays of Shakespeare the most precious things in our literature; but I do not think that the English theatre, even in the great days when Marlowe and Shakespeare, Webster and Beaumont and Fletcher were writing for it, ever had such a place in the life of the nation as the theatre of Athens had when its playwrights were men like Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Only a few plays survive out of the many which these great geniuses wrote; there were many other writers of plays who were held to be scarcely inferior to these three, and who sometimes even carried off the

prize from them, whose plays are lost for ever. But from the little that is left to us we can still judge that never did the mind of man reach to greater heights than in these dramas which the Athenians loved to listen to and to criticize. We think ourselves, of course, far superior to these slow old folks of so many centuries ago; but I wonder in what city to-day you would get tens of thousands to gather together, and sit for days listening to the greatest and deepest thoughts of the noblest thinkers, comparing them with each other, and judging carefully between their merits. The Athenians did that regularly—not a handful of the educated among them, but vast crowds of the common people. On a great festival-day at Athens you would see a crowd almost as big as a football cup crowd pouring into the Theatre of Dionysos, not to watch professionals kicking a football, but to listen by the hour to great poetry, and seriously to make up their minds which poet they preferred. But, of course, the Athenians are hopelessly out of date now.

In fact, the Greek theatre was as different from our theatre as it is possible for two things with the same name to be from one another. To us the theatre is a place where we go to be amused; to the Athenian it was a place where a great religious ceremony was performed to the glory of the gods, and for the education and improvement of men. Consequently, the Athenian got plays that will live for ever because they are the noble expression of noble thought, and we get—exactly what we deserve and desire.

But, indeed, the Greek theatre is so totally different from ours—in intention, in form, in everything, that it is no use trying to tell you all the differences. The best way is to take you to the theatre at Athens, and

ATHENS FROM THE ROAD TO ELEUSIS.

let you see what the place was like, how the plays were staged, what kind of an audience they had, and how the spectators behaved. We have to jump over a good many years, for the great Theatre of Dionysos, to which we are going, was not completed till long after the time of Pericles, though dramatic performances were given on the slope of the hill where it stands quite a hundred years earlier.

First of all, we must go to the booking office, and get our ivory tickets, stamped with our names and the numbers of our seats. For your ticket, unless you want to sit among the big folks in the reserved seats, you will pay two obols—say threepence, though, as threepence went farther in those days, the real value might be about ninepence. If you haven't got two obols to spend, you can go to the state office and ask for them, and they will be handed over to you; for the state believes that poor folks may need a good entertainment just as much as the rich, and may get as much benefit from it. There are mean folk in Athens, just as there are mean folk everywhere, who take advantage of the public generosity, and get their two obols though they have no need of them, and certainly don't go to the theatre with them.

Now we are safely seated in the theatre, and can look round us while the crowd is gathering. By the way, I hope you have remembered to bring a cushion, for the stone seats are rather hard and uncomfortable. One thing I am sure of—you never saw a theatre like this in your life before; nor, I am sure, one half so beautiful as this. Here is no stuffy, badly ventilated, tawdry building, with tinsel and electric light everywhere to make your eyes ache; but a huge, semicircular hollow, scooped out of the flank of the

Acropolis Hill, and lined with tier upon tier of seats, divided into sections by passages. They say that it holds 30,000 when it is packed—anyway, it can take in quite a big slice of the population of Athens. Of course, there is no roof, except the cloudless blue sky overhead. The theatre faces south, and as we sit we look out across the city and the plain to Phalerum, and the dark waters of the Saronic Gulf, beginning to sparkle now under the rays of the rising sun. Play-going in Athens is not an after-dinner business, you will understand; it begins at daybreak, and goes on all day long, and I hope you have brought figs and bread with you to keep you going.

In the midst of the semicircle of seats lies a broad, flat, circular space, with an altar in the centre. This is the orchestra; quite a different thing from ours; and here the chorus of the play will be ranged, with its flute-player, and will sing and dance. Beyond the orchestra is a kind of platform, where the main actors will play their parts. There are two ways up to it, and if the actor comes in by the western one, you know that he is supposed to be coming from the city or the harbour; if he comes in by the eastern, he is coming from the country. Behind the platform is a simple background. The Greeks do not trouble themselves much about scenery or any of the tricks that are used in modern theatres. It is the play they are interested in, and they put up with the simplest arrangements, so long as they are pleased with the poet or the actors. When a god has to appear from the sky, as sometimes happens in a play, they swing him in quite openly by a crane, which they call "the machine," on to the higher platform called "the god-stage." And so, by and by, we begin to talk about "the god from

the machine," when any wonderful intervention happens in affairs.

Our whole morning will be taken up with the hearing of one set of tragedies. In the afternoon, when lunch is over, we shall have a change, and hear comedy instead. Next day there will be a fresh set of tragedies in the forenoon, and of comedies in the afternoon, and the same order will hold on the third day, which will be the last day of the festival, when the plays will be judged, and prizes given to the authors of the best tragedy and the best comedy, to the best actor in each, and to the wealthy citizen who has provided the best chorus. For the plays are not presented by a theatre-manager, who hires his company and runs his show for profit. When a playwright has been selected to take part in the competition, his star actor is picked for him by lot, and the star then chooses two other actors to help him; for no matter how many characters there may be in a play, they are so arranged that three actors can perform all the parts, except, of course, the work that falls to the chorus. These three actors are paid by the State. There are no women among them: women's parts are all played by men, as in our own theatre in Shakespeare's time.

Of course, all this preparation has been going on for months before the plays are to be presented; and while the chief actors have been preparing for their task, the chorus has been in training also. Its work is provided for in a very curious way. The public official who looks after the affairs of the theatre keeps a list of wealthy citizens who can afford to spend money on the drama. To each playwright he assigns a man from this list, and this citizen has to hire, dress, and train at his own expense a body of singers and

dancers suitable for the play. If it is a tragedy, he will hire fifteen men; if a comedy, twenty-four. So you can imagine that the honour of staging a play for Euripides or Aristophanes is rather a costly one, especially if you are anxious to carry off the prize for the best-trained chorus from your neighbour in the next street.

Now we are all ready for the first play. The crier comes forward and proclaims that the tragic poet Euripides, or Phrynichus, or whoever it may be, will bring in his chorus. Everybody looks eagerly towards the entrance to the orchestra, and the fifteen performers file in, headed by their flute-player, and singing in unison as they come. When they reach their position in the flat circle, they form line three deep, the flute-player in the centre of the first row, with the leader of one semi-chorus on his right hand, and the leader of the other on his left. While they are singing, they dance also—not as we dance, but making simple graceful movements of the body to give emphasis to the words they sing. Whatever else they may do, they must say their words distinctly, so that everyone in the great audience can hear them; if they don't, the audience will soon let them know their mistake in a very uncomfortable fashion.

Now the first actor steps out on the low stage behind the orchestra, the chorus is silent, and the action of the play begins. But look at the actor. He seems a splendid figure from our seat in the huge semicircle, tall and stately, with magnificent robes, and strongly marked features. But if you could get close to him you would see that he is padded all round under his robes, to make him look bigger, that he walks in huge boots, whose cork soles are several inches thick, to give him a

more majestic height, and that those strong features of his are nothing but a big mask covering his whole head. Of course, he can never change his expression. Whatever he may be saying, the words come always from behind that fixed impassive face, and if he wishes to show the audience that he has undergone disaster or sickness, he must go behind the scenes and put on another mask with the appropriate expression. It seems very ridiculous, and, if you were supposed to see him near at hand, it would be ridiculous. But remember you are in a great open space that can hold 30,000 people, and that we are all looking at the play from a considerable distance. Common features would look insignificant in such a place, ordinary stature would be dwarfed. And so the actor wears his stilt-like boots and his towering mask, and from your seat you only see that he looks tall and dignified, and has a strong face. His two companions in the work will be equipped in the same way as himself, only with masks and robes fitted in expression and character to the parts they have to play.

One thing the Athenian audience is very particular about. They insist on hearing every word that the actor has to say. His unchanging face and his big boots don't trouble them; but they are there to hear the play, and if the actor's voice does not carry to the farthest seat in the theatre, or if he shouts too loud in his effort to make himself heard, or if he pronounces a word wrongly, he will very soon hear of it, and not in any complimentary fashion. Above all, if he overdoes his part, and rants about the stage, his audience will very quickly tell him to stop "playing the monkey," and to act properly.

As the play goes on, and the speeches of the actors

alternate with the songs and dances of the chorus, the spectators are wound up to great excitement. Indeed, it is just about as interesting to watch them as to watch the actors. If the play is pathetic, and the actors do it justice, you will see the whole vast gathering, perhaps, absolutely silent, clutching the sides of their seats, and gazing with painful eagerness at the stage; or perhaps they will start from their seats with tears and exclamations, and sway back and forwards as the strain of the action comes to a height. The Athenians love to have their feelings moved; but there are limits, and it is dangerous to harrow them up too much. Poor Phrynichus found that when he gave his play "The Sack of Miletus." His audience resented being made to suffer so much, and promptly inflicted a heavy fine on the too successful playwright.

On the other hand, if the play does not interest them, the audience is not slow to show disapproval. From all sides of the theatre comes a deafening chorus of whistling, clucking, banging of heels against the seats, till the unhappy actors are fairly driven from the stage. Sometimes, if an actor gets on the wrong side of them too much, they go even further, and pelt him with figs, or nuts, or whatever comes handiest. In fact a great Athenian orator once said of his rival, who had been an actor, that, when he was playing in the country, he was so pelted with figs and other fruit that he was able to set up a fruit-shop from the missiles gathered off the stage. However, that was probably a little bit of exaggeration, and, anyhow, the Athenians don't often go the length of throwing things, even at the worst of actors. They leave that to the provincials who know no better.

Three days of solid playgoing, tragedy all morning,

comedy all afternoon, seems rather a surfeit to our minds; but you have to remember that it only comes once a year, and that even comedies are only staged twice or thrice in a twelvemonth. So our Athenian playgoers have plenty of time to think over and digest what they have heard. For weeks and months they will talk over the plays they have heard, and quote the finest passages, and repeat the jokes. But, before the great audience breaks up on the third day, the prizes have to be awarded. A list of representative citizens has been drawn up; ten of these are chosen by lot to act as judges; these ten write down their verdicts, and place them in a vessel prepared for the purpose. The first five of these judgments drawn haphazard from the vessel will determine the prize. So that what we arrive at is really pretty much the judgment of the average intelligent Athenian on what he has heard; and, on the whole, the result seems to have been fairly creditable to the good taste of the citizens. When the verdict has been given, a money-prize is awarded to the writers of the best tragedy and the best comedy, and to the best actor in each; while the citizen who has trained and equipped the best chorus is rewarded with a bronze tripod. Generally he is so proud of the honour that he does not keep it to himself, but either dedicates it in one of the temples, or builds a pedestal in the street called Tripod Street, and sets his prize up there for everybody to see. Some of you, no doubt, have seen the Burns monument in Edinburgh, or on the Banks of Doon at Ayr. Probably you never thought of any connection between the Ayrshire ploughman-poet and the Greek theatre; but these monuments are just imitations, (not very brilliant ones,) of one of these old pedestals which an

Athenian named Lysicrates set up in Tripod Street of far-off Athens to bear the prize which he had gained for training the best chorus in the Theatre of Dionysos.

CHAPTER X

THE ART OF GREECE: PAINTING AND ARCHITECTURE

I AM almost afraid to put such a title at the head of this chapter, for more reasons than one. To tell you anything worthily about the Art of Greece would require not one short chapter of a little book, but the whole of a very big book. Then, to a great many people, the Art of Greece brings up nothing but recollections of dry statements about the different orders of architecture, and of visits to museum galleries where most of the statues seemed to have lost their noses, a good many of them their arms and legs, and some of them their heads. They were never in the least interested in such things, and don't care a sixpence about the differences between Doric and Ionic temples, or between a statue by Pheidias which has lost its arms, and one by Praxiteles which has lost an arm and a leg; and so the chapter on Greek Art is a very suitable one to skip. Worst of all, I can only tell you about a very small part of Greek Art. Music and Painting were most important parts of it; but Greek music has practically vanished, and we know next to nothing about it, and Greek painting has vanished altogether, and nothing remains to tell us what it was but a few popular stories about the great painters, which, like most popular stories, put all the emphasis on the wrong places. So that when we talk

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THE MOURNING WOMAN (*See pp.* 90—91.)

of Greek Art, we really mean Architecture and Sculpture. You must just remember that these little books are only peeps after all, and that the peep at Greek Art can only show you a very little of a very great thing.

First of all, let me say a word about Greek painting. I dare say you know all the old stories about it that you will find in Lempriere's Classical Dictionary and a hundred other books—how Zeuxis painted a bunch of grapes so realistically that the birds flew in and tried to peck at the fruit, and how Parrhasios painted a curtain so like the real thing that Zeuxis tried to draw it aside that he might see the picture behind, till Parrhasios said, "The curtain *is* the picture." Or how Apelles called on his brother-artist, Protogenes, and drew on the wall of his studio a line so fine that it seemed impossible to equal it, till Protogenes drew a line still finer over it; whereupon Apelles came back, and drew one finer still over the line of Protogenes, and so on, I suppose, *ad infinitum*. All these stories are quite useless, so far as telling us anything about Greek painting goes. Even if they were true, which is unlikely, the artists who played these rather silly tricks on one another may have been very bad painters all the same. Painting grapes to cheat the birds is not art, and if it comes to drawing fine lines, a Rowland's engine beats Apelles and Protogenes hollow.

We may be sure that Greek painting had something better to show than nonsense like that, and that the race which produced the finest sculpture the world has ever seen produced also pictures worthy to rank with the statues. We know that the Greeks themselves thought as highly of the paintings of Polygnotus,

Zeuxis, Apelles, and others, as of the sculpture of Pheidias and Praxiteles. And that is really all we can say about it. For the pictures that so delighted the Greeks of two thousand years ago have utterly vanished, and we shall never know what they were like. Some of them were painted in fresco, on plastered walls; some of them, like the pictures of the early Italian masters, in tempera—that is, in colour mixed with white of egg, or some other sticky substance (for the Greeks did not know the use of oil-colour for painting), and some of them in colour mixed with heated wax. In the National Gallery in London you will see some portraits painted in wax by Greek artists living in Egypt. Professor Petrie found them some years ago at Hawara, and some of them are wonderfully lifelike, though they are so old. But you must not judge Greek painting by them, for these are only the commonest of work, painted by tradesmen to put on coffin-lids. You don't expect much art in a coffin-lid; at least, you can say that these Egyptian portraits are a good deal more artistic than anything that our undertakers ever do.

Besides these Egyptian pictures, we have still a few frescoes from Pompeii and Herculaneum and other places where Greek influence had spread; but they are mostly only copies, and poor copies at that, of older work, and can tell us but little. It is sad to think that we have lost for ever pictures worthy to rank with the great statues of ancient Greece; but we must be thankful that while the paintings have gone, and most of the sculpture too, enough of the latter survives to let us see something of the genius of the greatest race of artists that ever lived on earth.

About some of the features of Greek architecture

I tried to tell you something in describing the Parthenon at Athens. But, though the main ideas of all Greek temples were very much the same, there were all sorts of differences in the details of them. Your temple, for instance, might be a Doric one, like the Parthenon, or it might be an Ionic one, like the smaller temple called the Erechtheum, which stood beside the Parthenon on the Acropolis, or it might be Corinthian, like the great temple of Olympian Zeus, which was built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, below the Acropolis on the banks of the Ilissus.

If it was Doric, its columns were shorter and stouter than in the other styles, their flutes had sharp edges dividing them, their capitals consisted simply of a kind of rounded cushion moulding, with a square block on the top of it, and the column had generally no base, but rested simply on the pavement blocks beneath. If it was Ionic, the columns rested on moulded bases, were taller and slenderer than Doric pillars, and carried capitals which curled over at either side like ram's horns ; while the flutings of the pillars were separated from one another, not by a mere sharp edge, but by a narrow flat face. The Corinthian pillar was like the Ionic in most respects, but its capital was much more highly decorated, being carved into the shape of a bunch of curling leaves of the plant called akanthus. But the Greeks were never very fond of the Corinthian style, which seemed to them overloaded with ornament, and it was only in later days that it was much used, and then more by the Romans.

Indeed the finest of all Greek building work was done in the simplest style of all, the Doric ; and though you may admire the rich carving of the Corinthian pillars, or the graceful curves of the Ionic

capitals, I think you will come in the end to see that the Greeks were right in their preference, and that none of their styles is so beautiful as the simple, straightforward, clean-lined Doric.

So far as building goes, there is nothing very wonderful about even the finest Greek temple. When you go to see a great Gothic cathedral, such as York or Amiens, you are amazed at the skill with which the whole building has been planned, the columns placed to take the thrust of the ribs that support the great vaulted roof, the buttresses and flying-buttresses set just where they are needed to press against the outward pressure from the vault, the way in which all unnecessary stonework has been cut away till the whole great building is just a framework of stone, set with pictures of painted glass. A Gothic cathedral always reminds one of a living thing, with bones and muscles constantly at work pushing and pulling as they are needed. In a Greek temple there is none of that.

Its beauty is the beauty of rest, simplicity, perfect proportion, perfect fitness. As building, it is the simplest thing you can conceive of. The Parthenon is built just exactly as you used to build with your wooden bricks in the nursery when you were ever so young. You set up two blocks, and laid a third across from the one to the other, and went on doing that as often as you felt inclined, or till you had no more bricks to build with. Well, the Greek architect did exactly the same, only he worked with pillars forty feet high, and stone cross-beams many tons in weight, and the number of his pillars and cross-beams, and the arrangement of them, was carefully planned out so as to make his simple building perfectly symmetrical. But a Greek temple is not a great adventure and

romance in stone like a Gothic cathedral. It is just the simplest and most straightforward solution of the simplest of all questions in building—"How are you to cover in a given space?"—and all the beauty of the solution lies in its perfect proportion, its quiet restfulness, and the perfect taste of the sculptured ornament with which the Greek enriched his simple building.

Only, remember, it is not all just quite so simple as it seems. When you look at a model of the Parthenon, you think a child could copy it, as I have suggested, with wooden blocks. Perhaps he could, after a fashion, and yet of all the many buildings that have been built, by more or less famous architects, in imitation of the Parthenon, there is not one to be named in the same breath with the work of old Iktinos. For the old Greek had a wonderful eye, a wonderful sense of what was most satisfying, and a wonderful understanding of how to correct little deficiencies in our seeing that we pay no heed to. You would build your wooden-block Parthenon all straight lines and right angles, and think it was wrong if the lines were not straight, the pillars not absolutely erect, or not all of one size, the base not exactly level. The Greek knew better. There is hardly a straight line or a right angle in this building of his which seems to be nothing but straight lines and right angles.

He knew, for instance, that a long base line absolutely level does not look level, but seems to sag downwards in the middle, and so he made the long line of pavement on which his pillars rested curve upwards ever so slightly in the middle, to correct this mistake of the eye. He knew that a pillar seen against the light looks thinner than one seen against a dark background, and so he made his corner pillars just a little

thicker than the ones which always had stone-work behind them. He knew that a pillar whose lines taper regularly from base to capital looks as though it were too thin in the middle, and so he gave his pillars the slightest and most delicate swell all the way to counteract that illusion. He knew that if you plant pillars absolutely square all round a building they will look as though they were really leaning outwards and ready to tumble; so he made his pillars slope inwards ever so little, so that if you pulled them out like telescopes they would meet at last, I forget how many miles up in the air; and thus again he corrected our blundering eyes and made things look right by being not right. So altogether you see the old Greek architect was a much cleverer man than you might think when you set out to copy him with a box of bricks. The Parthenon is not nearly so simple a thing as you are apt to imagine; and perhaps the genius of the man who foresaw all the needs of such a building and provided for them, so that, in spite of our defects of vision, it looks just right, was quite as subtle a thing as that of Robert of Luzarches when he flung the mighty vault of Amiens 150 feet up in the face of heaven.

One or two other things about Greek architecture may be worth mentioning. Remember that it was very different from the more or less faithful, not to say servile, copies of it that we see so often. It differed in material. The Greek always demanded the best for his best work. Marble if possible (the Parthenon is all Pentelic marble, one of the loveliest of stones); if not marble, then the next best. Workmanship was as perfect as human skill could make it. Nor was ornament the base mechanical thing, endless repetition of a single theme, turned out as though cast in a mould

or stamped by a machine, with which we adorn or disfigure our copies of Greek temples. The Greek was sparing in his use of it. He kept the great structural lines of his building almost absolutely clear of it: the great columns that support the cross-beams, the strong cross-beams that hold up the weight of the roof—these are left plain, or only adorned with straight lines or flutes that emphasize strength and lift. But where he does put ornament—on the broad triangle of the gable end east and west, on the frieze between the colonnade and the inner building, on the alternate blocks of the band below the cornice, it is of a kind that glorifies the building. The Parthenon is great in itself; but its greatest glory is that its ornament was planned by Pheidias and hewed under his eye.

Perhaps the last thing we need remember is that Greek buildings were not the cold grey stone, viewed under a cold grey sky, with which we are familiar. They were of brilliant white with a strong golden tone in it here and there; they were lit by a southern sun under a sky of southern blue. And, what seems strangest of all to us, they glowed with warm colour. Backgrounds of crimson or dark blue threw up the sculptures of pediment and frieze, bands of colour emphasized the lines of the capitals, metalwork was bronzed or gilded. There was none of the dead whiteness either in Greek architecture or Greek sculpture that we are accustomed to associate with them both. It seems strange, almost doubtful in taste to us, because we have been so accustomed to colourless whiteness as the Greek thing in art. But we have to forget that. The Greek loved colour, and used it freely, even upon marble; and we may take it that the most artistic of races knew its business in this, as in other things.

CHAPTER XI

THE ART OF GREECE: SCULPTURE.

Somehow I don't think that most of us are very much interested in sculpture. We do try to imagine that we are fond of pictures. Some of us go to the picture galleries and wander round them for an hour or so, perhaps a little pleased with some of the pictures, especially with those that tell a story which we can remember when we have looked up the name of it in the catalogue, perhaps a good deal bewildered with others which seem either meaningless or mad to us. Then we come away with a headache, and decide that we have had enough of art in the meantime, secretly wondering at all the fuss that some folks make over it. A picture gallery has a poor chance for popularity alongside a picture house, and when you are told how £70,000 was paid for a Madonna by Raphael, and £45,000 for a Venus by Velazquez, you feel that there must be some crazy people in the world.

But even pictures are popular compared with statues. How often do you look a second time at any of the statues in the streets and squares of your town? Perhaps that is not to be wondered at, for the chances are that most of them are pretty bad. But in our museums and galleries there are, if not originals, at least copies, of some of the most beautiful statues that the mind and hand of man have ever created, and yet very few of us seem to care anything for them. If you want a quiet, empty place in a museum or gallery, you are pretty safe to go to the sculpture room. If you do go there, you come away as soon as possible, remembering only that you saw a lot of battered,

E. Alinari, Photo

TOMBSTONE OF HEGESO. (*See p.* 91.)

broken figures, headless, armless, or legless, and probably that almost the only complete statue in the lot was a horrible thing that the catalogue called the Laocoön, representing a big man and his two sons writhing in agony in the coils of two great serpents. Statues, and especially Greek statues, don't interest you.

Yet I want to take the risk of wearying you, and to tell you something about the beauty of these poor battered fragments which are all that remains of the great art of the most artistic race that ever lived on earth. For nothing nobler or more beautiful was ever created by the hand of man than some of these poor waifs and strays from a great nation; and you will never know how splendid a man was the Greek at his best until you have come really to see them and to love them. The whole soul and heart of Greece was expressed in these figures of carven marble and molten bronze as nowhere else.

For the Greek really loved art, and had no greater pleasure than to see it around him on every side. He didn't mind living in a very plain and simple house, even though he were a rich and famous man; he didn't mind living on plain fare that you and I would turn up our noses at; but he simply had to have his city as beautiful as skill and money could make it. Money was never grudged for that. A million and a half to make a noble gateway to the houses of the gods on the Acropolis, a hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of gold to adorn the ivory statue of the Virgin-Goddess —that was money well spent. A sumptuous house and luscious food—well, that only gave pleasure to himself, and only to the lower part of him; but a noble picture, or statue, or temple was a glory to his city in the eyes of all the world, and a delight to thousands of

his fellow-citizens every day of their lives. So the Greek voted for the picture or the statue, and was content to live plainly himself, so that he and his townsmen might have beauty before their eyes wherever they went, and the fame of their city be increased among men. Can you imagine people like that? I dare say we know many things that they were densely ignorant of; but they knew and loved things that we would be all the better of knowing and loving too.

I wonder if we can ever realize how beautiful a city such as Athens must have been in the days of its glory. Art was everywhere, not huddled into dull galleries as with us, but set out in the streets and squares, on the hills and in the shrines, where everyone could see it under the blue southern sky. For hundreds of years each generation tried to surpass the ones before it in adding to the beauty of their city, till Athens must have been a perfect storehouse of wonders that would be worth countless millions to-day—if they could be got. Pictures in all the pillared halls where the citizens walked and talked and transacted business—statues everywhere, in street and wayside shrine, and high on the broad gable ends of every temple, sculpture in relief, high or low, along the temple walls, round the altars, on the tombstones. It was said once in scorn that in Athens it was easier to find a god than a man. That was when Athens had fallen from her glory, for in her great days her men were worthy of the figures of the gods they reared. But it helps you to understand how full the city was of all the best that art could do. Rome may have been greater and more gorgeous; but I fancy that Athens was incomparably the most beautiful city that the sun has ever shined upon.

So now let us look for a few minutes at one or two of the best things that have been saved out of the wreck. I can only show you a few, and so we shall not have time to look at any of the quaint but beautiful figures that come from the days when Greek art was in its childhood, just finding out what it wished to say and how to say it, still less to trouble ourselves with Dying Gladiators and Fighting Persians and such-like things from the days when art had grown over-ripe and was beginning to decay—wonderfully clever though they may be. All that we are to see must be of the best time—that wonderful 200 years from 500 to 300 B.C., when Greece was great in everything. Here, then, first of all, is the famous bronze Charioteer who was dug up a few years ago between the theatre and the temple at Delphi. In all likelihood he was dedicated by Anaxilas, tyrant of Rhegium, in memory of a victory in some chariot-race at the games, and very possibly the figure is a likeness of the tyrant himself in charioteer's garb. He stands stark and erect in his long flowing robe, the one hand that remains still holding the reins, the brown eyes, inlaid in coloured paste, looking steadily ahead along the course, the whole figure tensely gathered up in expectation of the start. Perhaps he is just a little stiff, and a little over-exact, for the art that created him is only beginning to find itself, and does not dare to be supple and flexible as yet; but all the promise of a brilliant day is in this dignified figure of art's morning, with the freshness and dew of youth upon it. The sculptor who imagined and executed this stately piece of work was already a great artist, though there were greater to follow, and though he worked nearly 2,500 years ago.

And now, if you want to see what a Greek athlete

looked like in the very moment when he was putting forth all his strength and skill, look at this copy of what is probably the most famous athletic statue of all time—Myron's Diskobolos or Disk-Thrower. The athlete is just at the very top of his swing, the whole body pivoting on the right foot, the left arm swung across the right knee to preserve the balance, the right arm, with the heavy disk in the hand, thrown back to its fullest extension. All the strength of the lithe, sinewy figure is on the strain for the moment ; another instant, and it will be relaxed, as the arm swings forward again, and the disk goes whirling through the air. No instantaneous photograph of a golfer in his swing or a runner in his stride ever gave a more perfect picture of the athlete in the very moment of his highest tension. Myron lived and worked a very long time ago, but I don't think anyone could teach him very much even to-day of what a well-trained human body should look like.

The Charioteer and the Disk-Thrower belong to the dawn and the early forenoon of Greek sculpture. Our next picture represents its noonday. Here are some of the horsemen from the frieze of the Panathenaic procession at the Parthenon—the greatest piece of low-relief sculpture that the world has ever seen, or ever will see probably. They are the work of Pheidias, or at least—for there is not a single figure existing that can be proved to be from his chisel—they were designed by him and carved under his supervision. Myron's Disk-Thrower makes you wonder how any man could be so clever as to carve a human figure in so difficult a pose. But you do not wonder at all at these young Athenian riders. You feel that they just were so, and could never have been anything else. So—quietly,

easily, and gracefully, an Athenian knight sat his fiery little horse, turning round carelessly to speak to his companion, or checking the eagerness of his spirited mount. Any man could see a hundred such figures any day in Athens; but there was just one man who could fix them there in stone, as though they were living still. And this is where art becomes perfect, when you forget all about the cleverness and skill of it, and simply see what the great man saw and meant you to see.

Perhaps the most popular of all Greek sculptors was Praxiteles, who lived about a century after Pheidias. To say that he was the most popular is not to say that he was the greatest; but certainly the Greeks thought all the world of him and his work. All kinds of stories were told about him. He made a statue of the goddess Aphrodite for the people of the island of Knidos, (there is a copy of it in the Vatican at Rome,) so lovely that Nicomedes, King of Bithynia, offered to pay off the whole of the National Debt of the island if only they would let him have the statue. To their honour the people of Knidos preferred to bear their own National Debt, and keep their goddess.

Praxiteles once wished to make a present of a statue to a rather too famous Greek lady named Phryne. She was puzzled to know which statue she ought to choose, and so she hit upon a rather cunning, not to say sneaky, plan. She sent a messenger to the sculptor to tell him that his house was on fire, whereupon Praxiteles cried out that he was ruined if his statue of Eros (the God of Love) were burned. So Phryne chose the Eros, knowing that Praxiteles thought it his best work.

Till the year 1877 we had never seen a real original statue from the chisel of this great artist—nothing but

copies, like the Vatican Aphrodite. But in that year the German excavators at Olympia found there a statue of Hermes, the Greek messenger-god, exactly as an old Greek writer described it, and in the very place where he saw it. One arm and both legs from below the knee were lost, but otherwise the figure was perfect, and you can see from the picture how beautiful it is. The young god stands in an easy position, holding on his right arm his little baby brother-god, Dionysos. The lost right hand probably dangled something, perhaps a bunch of grapes, before the baby, and little Dionysos reaches out his chubby hand to grasp it. But Hermes himself is not looking at his brother. He looks past him, with a dreamy expression, as though he were seeing something that we cannot see. The whole figure is exquisite in its gentle grace. Look at the carving of the hair. A second-rate artist would have tried to make it as like real hair as possible, and so have spoiled the whole effect. But Praxiteles knew that marble is marble, and that you must never try to make your material tell a lie; and so the curling locks are only suggested, and the whole head looks far stronger and more lifelike than if he had wasted his time cutting feeble lines all over the surface, and trying to make

> "Each particular hair to stand on end,
> Like quills upon the fretful porpentine."

If the Greeks made their gods in their own image, at least you can say that it was a splendid image.

And now, if you want to know what a noble Athenian lady of the fourth century B.C. looked like, take this statue of the Mourning Woman, from the British Museum. No one knows who carved it, though

it belongs to about the time of Praxiteles; but I am sure you never saw anything more exquisitely graceful than this slight, sad figure, its lovely head gently bowed in sorrow, and all its grace accentuated by the lines of the flowing robes. The artist, whoever he was, that made this figure, was a great man among the greatest.

All that I have shown you so far is work from the hands of great artists. But the last thing I want you to look at is different. It is just the tombstone of an Athenian lady, "Hegeso, the daughter of Proxenos," who lived and died somewhere about 400 years before Christ. It is as simple and unaffected as possible. Hegeso is gone; well, let us put up, not a lamentation in stone, but something that will remind us of her just as we used to see her, taking, perhaps, a necklace out of the casket that her servant brings her. Remember that what you have to compare this with is not any of our big monuments, but the average tombstone in our churchyards and cemeteries. I wonder if we have much reason to be proud of the comparison.

Well, then, now that you have seen some really good Greek work in sculpture, how does it impress you? To me it seems that the things one remembers most about it are Simplicity and Nobility. It is all perfectly straightforward and perfectly dignified. The Greek artist had no use for the tricks that make people gape and say, "How clever!" and he hated with his whole heart all kinds of freaks and exaggerations. You will never get from him anything that is vulgar or ignoble, least of all anything that is vile. Someone has said that his aim is "to express, with noble simplicity and truth, something intrinsically worthy of expression"; and it was surely no unworthy aim. To have something fine to tell men, to tell it, whether in words or in

colours, in marble or in bronze, simply, truly, nobly: I do not know that you can ask a great deal more of any art.

Only there is one thing. It is the last thing I have to tell you, and perhaps it holds the secret of how Greek faith, and culture, and art, great and noble in many ways as they are, failed and passed away at last. And that one thing you see perhaps more clearly than anywhere else in the art of this noble race. It had no place for the dark and broken side of human life, out of which come all the greatest and highest things that we know. The Greek loved strength, wholeness, beauty, and put away from him as far as possible all thought of sorrow and suffering. It was not till after Jesus Christ had come into the world that men began to realize that the greatest things on earth are not beauty and strength, but love, sympathy, and sacrifice. The Hermes of Praxiteles is beautiful and strong; but I wish I could have put beside him Donatello's great Christ on the Cross at Padua, for the contrast would have shown you, far better than I can tell it, where the Greek failed. The Greek god is far more beautiful than the Christian Saviour; but the Italian sculptor has done an infinitely greater thing, and taught an infinitely greater truth than Praxiteles ever dreamed of.

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